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THE FUTURE LIFE.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

GLIMPSES

OF

THE FUTURE LIFE.

WITH AN APPENDIX

ON THE

PROBABLE LAW OF INCREASE OF

THE HUMAN RACE.

BY

MUNGO PONTON, F.R.S.E.

AUTHOR OF 'THE BEGINNING, ITS WHEN AND ITS HOW' ETC.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

'Behold, I make all things new.'—REV. XXI. 5.

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which the present heaven and earth are to pass away, by no means involves the idea of annihilation. They are to undergo the violent action of fire, so as to operate in them a great and lasting change; but the same materials are to be wrought into a new, more beautiful, and enduring form, so as to constitute a new heaven and a new earth. This view is clearly brought out by the language of St. Peter; for, speaking of the antediluvian world, he says —'By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth subsisting out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.' Thus it appears, that he describes the antediluvian world as having 'perished:' although it only underwent a great alteration, and gave place to a new system. In like manner, we find that after foretelling the subjection of the subsisting heaven and earth to the violent action of fire, so as to reduce the whole to a mass of molten material, he adds, 'But we, according to his promise, expect new heavens and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness.' This expression renders it evident that, notwithstanding the great conflagration which is to reduce the present earth and its atmosphere to a molten globe, we are to expect that, out of this chaos, God will, according to His promise, elaborate a new heaven and a new earth, to become the abode of the righteous.

The apostle John recurs to the subject of the passing away of the present heaven and earth, when he comes to speak of the new heaven and earth mentioned by St. Peter: and he makes the removal of the old world a reason for the formation of the new. He regards the existence of the heaven and earth as a necessity—stating that he saw a new heaven and a new earth; 'For the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.' This last statement corroborates

the prophecy of St. Peter, that the present world is to be destroyed, not like that which subsisted before the flood, by the action of water, but by the agency of fire, which is not only to cause the atmosphere to explode and the earth to melt, but the mighty ocean itself to evaporate and pass away.

It is needful to bear distinctly in mind that the removal of the first heaven and earth and sea occurs before the scene of judgment; for the apostle expressly affirms, that the heaven and earth fled before the face of Him that sat upon the throne. Now he could have no possible reason for making that statement in this place, seeing he repeats it afterwards, unless it were to indicate the order of time in which the events happened, and to show that the present heaven and earth passed away *before* and not *after* the occurrence of the judgment scene.

It would appear that the attention of the apostle was so riveted by the vision of the great white throne, and the judgment which followed, that the entire change which had taken place in the heaven and the earth at first escaped his notice, and that he did not remark it till after the judgment scene had passed from his view, and he was left at leisure to contemplate the new order of things; but his mention of the passing away of the old world before the judgment leaves no room to doubt of that scene's having been presented to his mind, not in the old but in the renovated world. This point is important: for, in his vision of the judgment, St. John incidentally mentions some of the features of this new creation.

Now comes the description of the judgment scene itself: 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.' It is remarkable that the apostle does not particularly describe the scene of the general resurrec-

tion. The reason for this reserve seems to be similar to that for his silence regarding the manner in which the destruction of the present world is to be accomplished. The general resurrection had already been made the subject of a special revelation to St. Paul, who had placed it on record in his epistles to the Corinthians and Thessalonians, both of which were most probably well known to St. John. He therefore omits all mention of those particulars, making his description of the resurrection quite general. It is further remarkable that he does not mention the resurrection till *after* the judgment, thus showing his mind to have been so preoccupied with the judgment scene that the mere fact of the resurrection appeared to him of secondary importance.

The phrase which he employs to indicate those who stood before the judgment seat is so general as to embrace all mankind—'the dead, small and great.' It is right to mention that Griesbach and Lachmann read here, 'before the throne,' instead of 'before God'; and this reading is supported by both Bloomfield and Alford. The alteration, however, is of little moment, seeing there can be no doubt that the occupant of the throne was no other than the Deity manifested in the person of Christ; while, if the word really be 'throne,' it must be used figuratively for Him that sat thereon.

The apostle proceeds to state, 'And the books were opened, and another book was opened which was the book of life.' This translation is not very accurate; for in the original the article is wanting before the word 'books.' The following mode of rendering the passage would convey a more correct idea of the meaning: 'and volumes were unrolled, and another volume was unrolled which is that of life.' This emblem is one of great beauty. The history of each man's life, which is impressed upon his own memory and upon that of the

Divine Mind is here exhibited to the eye of the apostle under the symbol of a written roll; while these numberless volumes are represented as being now unrolled, to signify the laying open of the secrets of every heart. The other book, which is that of life, is obviously the written word which unfolds the way of life. It would be a sad misconception to imagine this book of life to be a sort of muster-roll, containing the names of certain favourites of heaven from all eternity predestined to everlasting life. To this idea the passage before us lends no countenance whatever; for it is manifest that, were such the nature of the book of life, there would be no necessity for opening any other volume. It would be sufficient to call over the muster-roll of the predestined; and then all those passed over as not being found written in the roll would be, in one indiscriminate mass, plunged into what is symbolically called 'the lake of fire.'

But the allegory is far otherwise. The volume of each individual's character is unrolled; it is compared with the character described in the book of life, as being necessary to the enjoyment of everlasting life; and according as the one is found to tally with the other or not, so is the doom of the individual sealed. Were salvation a matter of predestination, there could be no room for such a comparison. If the name was found written in the book of life, it would at once be concluded that the character corresponded; while if the name was omitted from the book of life, it would at once be inferred that the individual was among the unfortunate for whom the sacrifice of Christ was of no avail—whose sins His blood was never designed to wash away.

So unworthy a notion of Divine justice, however, is entirely overthrown by what follows: 'And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.' Thus it is not

according to any predestination, or to any creed, or to any church, or to any sect, that they are judged, but simply 'according to their works.'

They are said to have been judged out of those things 'which were written in the *books*,' neither out of what was written in the book of life alone, nor out of what was recorded in the other books—containing the record of each man's works alone, but out of both combined—by comparison of the one with the other. Were the book of life a mere muster-roll of those predestined to be saved, the examination of the other records would be superfluous; it would only be necessary to call the roll. But the Great Judge does not proceed upon such a principle of favouritism; He in each case examines *two* records, the record of every one's works and that of His own word, showing what works are requisite to the attainment of eternal life, while by a comparison of these two He makes each man's conscience convict himself.

While the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil, are thus clearly indicated as being the grounds of decision in the case of each one standing before the judgment seat, it must not be imagined that it is merely external actions which are thus to be examined. The motives from which the actions have sprung will be minutely scanned; they alone are the sons of God who are led by the Spirit of God; consequently, those actions only are pleasing in His sight which spring from the yielding of the will to the guidance of that spiritual influence which the Deity brings, through the medium of the conscience, to bear upon the mind. It is this yielding of the will to the influence of God's Holy Spirit that constitutes the principle of that faith, without which, St. Paul declares it is impossible to please God. It embraces the opinions, the sentiments, and the affections. It is when the mind yields to the enlightening influences

of that Spirit on the understanding, and unhesitatingly adopts the convictions thus impressed, that it exhibits the principle of faith in matters of belief; while this is quite as much one of the works according to which men shall be judged, as any external act whatever. Doubtless no man shall be called to account for his belief, except according to the measure of light given to him; for to whom little is given, of him shall little be required. It is only for wilful resistance to inwrought convictions that he shall be held responsible, not for mere errors of opinion arising from involuntary ignorance or lack of understanding.

Again, the yielding of the mind to those aspirations after an immortality of bliss, which are also produced by the agency of the Divine Spirit, constitutes that hope and confidence toward God, which feeds the flame of filial love and supports us amid suffering and trial. Lastly, the yielding of the mind to the influence of God's Holy Spirit upon the affections begets in us that fervent love to God and tender charity toward all men, which are the distinguishing characteristics of every genuine disciple of Christ.

Such are the works described in the book of life as being needful to the attainment of everlasting happiness; and it is only if our works, as found registered in the record of our mortal career, be found to tally with these, that we shall meet the approval of our Judge. There must first be the willing mind, and then it will be accounted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.

Having thus far described the scene of judgment, the apostle recurs to the subject of the general resurrection, v. 13: 'And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell (or *hades*) gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every man, accord-

ing to their works.' It is remarkable that he here speaks of the sea's giving up her dead, notwithstanding he had intimated that the heavens and the earth had fled from the face of the Great Judge, and afterwards affirms more at large that they had passed away, and there was 'no more sea.' The scene of the judgment and the general resurrection is thus indicated to have been laid in the new heavens and the new earth, whose existence he does not particularly mention till afterwards. It may hence be inferred that the sea shall form a feature of the new earth, as it did of the old, and that many of the dead shall appear to rise out of its waters. This phenomenon seems to have struck the mind of the seer most forcibly, as he mentions it first in order. But the vision of the dead rising out of the sea had doubtless a symbolical meaning, being designed to indicate that all who may at any time have been ingulfed in the ocean shall participate in the resurrection, embracing in this class the immense number that perished in the general deluge. It is more puzzling to see why death and *hades* should be separately mentioned, as giving up the dead which were in them. The death here spoken of is evidently the transition from the embodied to the disembodied state; while *hades* is the disembodied state itself. Why then should both be mentioned as giving up their dead? One mode of accounting for this may possibly be, that there are, in the disembodied state, some who have not entered it through the gates of ordinary death. There are two such instances recorded—those of Enoch and Elias, neither of whom, we are informed, died in the ordinary sense of that term. They equally with the rest of mankind, passed into *hades*, or disembodiment, though spared the pain and humiliation attending the ordinary process of dissolution. They might therefore be classed among the

dead as being in *hades*, though death had exercised no power over them.

If the separate mention of death and *hades* be not designed for the purpose of embracing those two cases, we must regard their being thus linked together as arising merely from the necessary connection subsisting between them—*hades*, or disembodiment, being the necessary result of death.

It is remarkable that all who stand before the judgment seat are spoken of as 'dead.' This shows the vanity of the opinion that there shall be a certain number of the human race alive on the earth at the time Christ shall come to judge the world—an opinion arising out of a misapprehension of the language employed by St. Paul in his description of the general resurrection; but as there will be occasion to notice that description in the sequel, further allusion to it shall be deferred.

Suffice it to observe that all, without exception, who appear before the judgment seat are spoken of as dead. This statement may at first sight appear inconsistent with what is foretold of Christ, that He is to judge 'the quick and the dead.' This, however, was spoken of those who were alive at the time of the prediction and who should afterwards live on the earth, but was not designed to lead to the inference that any shall be alive in their mortal flesh at the day of judgment. Such an idea is utterly inconsistent with St. Peter's description of the great conflagration, by which the present system of the world is to be destroyed preparatory to its renovation, as also with the statement of St. John, that the judgment scene followed that mighty catastrophe. This further averment of his, that only the dead stood before the judgment seat, confirms the accuracy of the previous conclusion, that all must have died before that solemn tribunal was set.

Equally obvious is it, that all, both the good and the

bad, are to awake from the slumber of death, and in new corporeal frames, to stand before their righteous Judge. This is evident from the circumstance of the giving up of the dead by *hades*, or disembodiment. In no sense could it be affirmed that disembodiment gave up its dead, unless by their receiving new bodies so as to enable them to emerge from that condition.

The reiteration of the statement—'and they were judged, every man according to his works,' appears intended to indicate more forcibly that this is to be the sole criterion of judgment, and also that the wicked as well as the good are to come out of *hades*—to emerge from the disembodied into the embodied condition. This fact is brought still more prominently into view in the sequel.

CHAPTER II.

DEATH AND HADES.

Now comes the very remarkable statement contained in the 14th verse—'And death and *hades* were cast into the lake of fire.' What are we to understand by this casting of death and *hades* into the lake of fire?—that same lake into which the beast, the false prophet, and the spirit of deception, had previously been cast. Seeing it is impossible to regard death and *hades* as signifying beings of any sort, the latter being merely the disembodied condition of man, and the former the transition into that state by the dissolution of the present body, so it seems impossible to regard 'the lake of fire' otherwise than as a metaphor; for it is plain that such mere abstractions as death and *hades* could not be cast into a physical 'lake of fire.' This last then is thus clearly indicated to be nothing more than a vivid emblem of the Divine detestation and displeasure. By the casting of death and *hades* into the lake of fire, therefore, we are to understand their being thrown aside as objects of God's abhorrence—as blemishes in the system of the universe, and their having, after the final judgment, no more power over the human race.

Fully to comprehend how death and *hades* should thus be regarded by the Deity with so much hatred, we must bear in mind their origin. Mere death, as a law of nature, applicable to the vegetable kingdom and to all the

lower animals, subsisted from the beginning of this world's history, long before the creation of man. Of this fact, the science of geology affords superabundant evidence. But death and *hades*, as applicable to the rational being, man, formed no part of God's primary intentions with respect to him. God made man upright, pure, and holy, designing that he should so abide and live for ever. True, He endowed him with freedom of will, thus conferring upon him a moral dignity, which infinitely upraised him above the beasts that are governed by mere instinct; and this freedom involved, in its very essence, the possibility of man's moral disobedience to the divine law. But it was no part of God's intention that man should so abuse this freedom as to disobey. It was the very reverse. It is impossible to impute to the Deity the inconsistency of ostensibly commanding man to forbear from doing that which He secretly intended, had actually decreed and certainly foreknew that he should do, in virtue of the freedom with which he had been endowed. True, God permitted man to be subjected to trial; but how could his obedience be tested, or his freedom of will be called into exercise so as to render to God a willing obedience, except by his being tried?

Seeing the gift of free-will involved the inherent possibility that man *might* disobey the moral law laid down for his guidance, it was needful that provision should be made for the emergence of that possibility; and the Deity accordingly predetermined that if man should unhappily disobey, death and *hades* should follow his transgression. Hence death and *hades* must, equally with sin itself, have been objects of the divine aversion, as being blemishes upon his perfect moral system—blemishes of which not He but the creature was the primary cause. It was doubtless in mercy that God decreed the disembodiment of man to follow, as a necessary consequence, his trans-

gression; for He has thus paved the way for his fallen creature's restoration to a perfect and immortal state. But, viewed in themselves, the Great Governor of the universe must regard death and *hades* much in the same light as that in which a benevolent earthly sovereign contemplates the prison, the scaffold, and the other punitive means by which he finds it needful to uphold the majesty of the law; only with an abhorrence infinitely more intense.

It ought not, therefore, to cause in us any surprise, to learn that this hateful pair, death and *hades*, are to be cast into the lake of fire—that is, thrown aside for ever as things utterly loathsome in the sight of God, being equally the tokens and the objects of his displeasure.

Nor is the Divine abhorrence of death and *hades* without its reflection in the human mind. To all men they are naturally objects of dread and aversion. This feeling is beautifully expressed by the Hebrew Psalmist, when he says, Psalm xviii. 5—'The sorrows of *Hades* compassed me about, the snares of death came before me.' And again, Psalm cxvi. 3. 'The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of *hades* caught me; I found trouble and sorrow.' In like manner, speaking prophetically in the person of the Messiah, he expresses delight in the prospect of deliverance from *hades*, saying, —'Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hades*, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy One to see corruption,' Psalm xvi. 10. Again, speaking apparently in his own person, he expresses himself confidently in reference to his own ultimate deliverance from this unenjoyable state—'But God will redeem my soul from the power of *hades*, for he shall receive me,' Psalm xlix. 15. These feelings were engendered by a just appreciation of the true nature of the disembodied state, of which the Psalmist was not

ignorant; for he says, Psalm vi. 5—'For in death there is no remembrance of Thee, in *hades* who shall give Thee thanks?' A sentiment repeated by his descendant Hezekiah, as recorded by Isaiah, chap. xxxviii. 18—'For *hades* cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee.' This idea is also more fully developed by Solomon, who says, 'For there is no work nor device, nor knowledge nor wisdom, in *hades*, whither thou goest,' Eccles. ix. 10.

These notions of the ancient Hebrew writers are fully confirmed by our Saviour, who speaks of the disembodied state as the night in which no man can work, and of those who are in that state as being asleep. Indeed this latter is the most correct description of the condition of the soul when severed from the body. Death in man is not, as it is in the lower animals, the utter extinction of existence. It is merely a temporary cessation of all consciousness of existence—a cessation which is the necessary result of the dissolution of that organism through which alone the human soul can have any consciousness whatever. This fact is put beyond all doubt by the phenomenon of suspended animation, which renders it evident that even the temporary unfitness of the organism to perform its vital functions utterly deprives the soul of the consciousness of its own existence.

To form a correct idea of death and *hades*, then, we have only to imagine the state of suspended animation to be indefinitely prolonged. The soul does not cease to be, it only becomes unconscious that it is. Hence, our Saviour, though he speaks of the souls in *hades* as being asleep, yet positively declares that they still continue to exist; for, in evidence of this fact, he quotes the saying of the Deity, that He is the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob—adding, 'He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' And he gave a still more convincing proof of the fact, by recalling Lazarus to life.

Christ thus guards us, on the one hand, from viewing death as the utter extinction of existence, and on the other from regarding *hades* as a state of activity and consciousness. And in conveying to us this knowledge, He was influenced by a merciful consideration toward the natural feelings of men; for nothing could reconcile the reflecting mind to the deprivation of all connection with the material world, save the assurance that, while in the condition which utterly excludes that connection, he shall be entirely without consciousness, and that, so far as each individual mind is concerned, the resurrection shall appear to follow death *instantaneously*, without any appreciable interval of time. It is obviously in allusion to this fact, that St. Paul speaks of our great change from the corruptible to the incorruptible state, as taking place in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye—and that our Saviour says to the dying penitent, 'Verily I say unto thee, *to-day* shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' But it may be asked, if *hades* be a state of unconsciousness, why should the Psalmist have expressed such dread of it, and spoken of its pains? To this it may be answered, that the word which our translators have rendered 'pains,' means more properly cords or restraints—'the restraints of *hades*'—thus indicating that it involves no actual suffering, but only the being deprived of active enjoyment. Hence the Psalmist assigns as his reasons for his dislike, that in death there is no remembrance of God, and that in *hades* it is impossible to give God thanks. It is the being shut out, not only from all connection with the material world, but from all communion with God, and reduced to a merely passive state of existence —to latent life.

In like manner, St. Paul regards the disembodied state as so little enjoyable, and re-embodiment as so much the object of universal desire, that he represents the whole

creation as together groaning and travailing, as he did also groan within himself, while yearning for the redemption of the body—declaring, in another place, that he shrunk from the idea of being unclothed, but rather longed to be better clothed with the new organism, for which he hoped, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

It will accordingly be observed that St. John speaks of all that are in *hades* as being dead, and yet declares that *hades* gave up the dead that were in it, thus showing that these dead were not non-existent, but that they emerged into a new state of existence by passing from the disembodied to a re-embodied condition.

It must be further kept in view, that were *hades* a state of activity and consciousness, in which, although the soul be cut off from all connection with matter, yet, contrary to the assertion of David, it could maintain communion with God, and with other disembodied spirits, it must either be consciously happy or consciously miserable. Thus judgment would be passed upon the soul, the essential part of man, immediately after death, so that there would be no need for that general judgment which is not to take place till after the soul shall have come out of *hades*, and resumed a corporeal existence—an event which is not to occur till after the present heaven and earth shall have passed away, and been replaced by a new heaven and a new earth.

The opinion therefore that the human soul, while in *hades*, or the disembodied state, is active and conscious, is contrary alike to experience, to reason, and to scripture; to experience, for the phenomenon of suspended animation shows, that even the temporary unfitness of the body to perform its vital functions renders the soul unconscious; to reason, for it teaches us that all our mental perceptions are derived, and all our mental operations performed,

through the medium of our material organization—consequently that the destruction of that organization must effectually interrupt all perception and thought; to scripture, for, with reference to man, it teaches us that 'his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish'—that they who are in *hades* are asleep, and that in it 'there is neither work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,' but that it is 'the night in which no man can work,' which imposes the restraints of total inactivity.

It is this circumstance that renders it an object of aversion to the Divine Mind. Were disembodiment a state of mental activity in which the human soul could hold more intimate communion with God than it is capable of enjoying while encased in the flesh, why should disembodiment be regarded by the Deity with such abhorrence, as appears to be represented by the metaphor of His casting *hades* into the lake of fire? God desires all His intelligent creatures to render Him thanks and praise; and it is because in *hades* it is impossible to give God thanks, or to celebrate his praise, that He regards it as an object of detestation, which He is to cast aside for ever; so that His redeemed creatures may no longer remain in that unconscious, inactive, thankless and praiseless condition.

But while the associated pair, death and *hades*, are hateful alike to God and man, there is to the latter something of comfort and hopefulness in their mere association. To the members of the vegetable kingdom, and to the lower animals, death comes alone, unaccompanied by *hades* or disembodiment. In their case, the individual non-material organizer does not survive the dissolution of the individual organism. There are no disembodied spirits of the plants or lower animals. The mere circumstance, then, that in the case of man death is

declared to be accompanied by disembodiment, is an assurance that the individual human non-material organizer or soul does survive the dissolution of its own organism—passing into disembodiment and latent life—ready to organize another and nobler organism, when the Creator shall endow it with the needful power.

It will be observed that there is a remarkable difference between the statement with respect to the casting of death and *hades* into the lake of fire, and that which records the casting of the spirit of deception, the beast and the false prophet, into that same abyss; for it is said that the spirit of deception 'was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where are the beast and the false prophet, and they shall be tormented day and night unto the ages of the ages;' whereas of death and *hades* it is said they 'were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death.' Now it is evident that this last clause is merely descriptive of what is meant by 'the lake of fire'—that it is the second death, and does by no means involve the idea that death and *hades* were themselves subjected to that second death—an idea excluded by their very nature. In like manner, we ought to understand the above-quoted clause, 'And they shall be tormented day and night, unto the ages of the ages,' as being also merely descriptive of what is meant by 'the lake of fire;' namely, that it is a condition of continuous and enduring misery, constituting the second death. It is plain, however, that such abstractions as the spirit of deception, the beast and the false prophet, cannot be themselves subjected to this enduring torment, any more than death and *hades* can be subjected to the second death.

What we are to understand is, that 'the lake of fire and brimstone' is a vivid emblem of the Divine displeasure; that the spirit of deception, the beast, the false prophet,

death and *hades*, are all equally objects of the Divine abhorrence, and that all beings capable of suffering, who shall fall into the abyss of the Divine indignation, shall undergo enduring misery, resulting from the Divine displeasure, which constitutes the second death. The concluding clause of the passage before cited is therefore to be taken in an indefinite sense, as applicable not specially to the spirit of deception, the beast and the false prophet, but to all who fall under the Divine condemnation. In so far as it may apply to the three abstractions above named, it must refer to the adherents and upholders of those evil principles, not to the abstract principles themselves.

That there shall be cast into this symbolical lake beings capable of enduring suffering, we gather from what immediately follows: 'And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.' The word 'written' is here used in the sense of 'described'—'Whosoever was not found described in the book of life.' The character which is needful to the attainment of everlasting happiness is very clearly described in that book. If any man's character, therefore, does not tally with this description, it may truly be affirmed of him that he is not described in the book of life. All such, it is stated, were cast into 'the lake of fire.'

Now, it is not a little remarkable, that, before thus announcing that any of those who had emerged from death and *hades*, and had been tried before the judgment seat, were cast into 'the lake of fire,' the apostle gives a clear indication of the purely metaphorical nature of that emblem, by representing death and *hades* as being themselves cast into it, and by calling it 'the second death,' a second shutting out from the light of God's countenance,

and from the joy which His presence and approval inspire.

From the circumstance that death and *hades* were cast into this limbo before the condemned, it might at first sight be inferred that the former are still to have power over the latter; but the previous announcement, that all who are thus doomed 'shall be tormented day and night unto the ages of the ages,' is inimical to this supposition. It is also discountenanced by the very precise terms in which our Saviour Himself speaks on this subject, when at the conclusion of His description of the judgment scene, as given in Matthew xxv., he says (v. 46): 'And these shall go away into age-enduring punishment, but the righteous into age-enduring life.'

It is better, however, to refrain from making any attempt to lift the veil of imagery by which the fate of the condemned is shrouded. It is vain to speculate on the place of their abode, or the nature or duration of their punishment; whether it is to be purely mental, or both mental and corporeal; whether it is to be simply retributive and to endure for ever, or is to be only reformatory, and to cease on the accomplishment of its reformative design. Instead of fruitless inquiries into these points, or such like, let everyone rather endeavour to avoid in his own person, and urge others to escape, that dreadful destiny; for dreadful it must be, judging from the figurative language in which it is described in the Bible. Let all of us, moreover, constantly bear in mind that—

> 'In lonely disembodiment
> None cry for mercy, none repent;
> But sealed for ever is the doom
> Of all the tenants of the tomb.'

It is remarkable that in his description of the judgment

scene, the apostle says nothing of the fate of those who are justified, and speaks only of that of the condemned. What is to become of the redeemed he leaves to be gathered from the beautiful imagery which immediately follows, and to the consideration of which we shall now proceed.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH.

THE solemnities of the judgment seat having been shadowed forth in emblems to the mental eye of the apostle, that wondrous scene at last vanishes from his view, and he is left at leisure to contemplate the new order of things which had been introduced. He says (chap. xxi. 1): 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea,' or rather 'and the sea is no more.'

From the circumstance that the attention of the apostle is only now attracted to the new heaven and the new earth, we may gather that they did not greatly differ in physical aspect from the old. He was given to understand that the old heaven and earth, with the former sea, had passed away before the arrival of the Great Judge; but still he saw a heaven in which the throne of judgment was set, and an earth on which stood they who had been dead, small and great, before the throne, and a sea from which a considerable portion of the dead appeared to emerge.

It might be objected to this view, that the averment with respect to the sea is in the present tense, 'and the sea is no longer.' But this expression may apply only to the now subsisting sea.

The statement contained in the 11th verse of the pre-

ceding chapter, that the earth and heaven fled from the face of the Judge, shows that the passing away of these, mentioned again in the opening of the 21st chapter, happened before the judgment; while the standing of the dead before the throne indicates the existence of a place where they stood, and which could be no other than the new earth that had replaced the old. Hence, also, the sea which gave up her dead was most probably the new sea. It is, moreover, evident that a new physical earth could not subsist without some source of moisture; and as the apostle saw a river in the new earth, it may be inferred that there was some great collection of water into which the river flowed, and whence its waters could again be replenished by evaporation.

The phrase 'and the sea is no more' may possibly, however, be intended to indicate that the watering of the new earth is to be accomplished, not by one immense continuous ocean, but by a vast number of moderately-sized lakes, widely distributed over the surface of the globe. The expression may also mean simply that the sea, which was once within the seer's field of view, at the moment when it gave up its dead, was now withdrawn from the scene.

The apostle presently further affirms that he also beheld an exceeding high mountain. It is, therefore, on the whole, probable that he did not discover by mere inspection that the heaven and earth now before his eyes were a new creation, but that he was given mentally to understand that such was the case.

If it be suggested that the terms heaven, earth, and sea, may in these passages have a symbolical meaning, and indicate the substitution of a new world for the old, in a metaphysical and moral, rather than a physical sense, such an interpretation would be open to a twofold objection. Were the heaven and earth which fled from the

face of the Judge merely some portion of human society, this averment would be inconsistent with the statement that all the dead stood before the throne to be judged. Secondly, it would be difficult to find, in the future and everlasting state of human society, moral and metaphysical conditions corresponding to the distinction between heaven and earth, both of which are said to have been made new.

It will be observed that St. John, with philosophical accuracy, here uses the word 'heaven' in the singular number. This is the more remarkable, for, according to the Hebrew idiom, it would have been more natural for him to have used the plural. St. Peter, in describing the destruction of the present system, and foretelling the advent of a new world, follows the idiom of his native tongue, and speaks of 'the heavens;' but that he means only the atmosphere is evident from his allusion to the antediluvian world, in which he speaks of the heavens that were of old, and the heavens that are now. As if to remove all doubt on the point, however, and to show that the great change which is to overtake the terraqueous globe is in no way to affect the other members of our planetary system, or the starry heavens at large, St. John corrects the idiomatic expression of St. Peter, and speaks of 'the heaven' in the singular number, thus restricting the term to the immediate heaven belonging to this earth, namely, the aerial atmosphere. What we are to understand then, is, that by the time to which this part of the vision relates, the subsisting atmosphere, dry land and sea, had all been changed by the action of fire; and that what was now presented to the mental eye of the apostle was a new atmosphere and a new earth, with either a new ocean or a new system of widely-distributed lakes, which had by the almighty

power of the Creator been produced from the ruins of the present world.

When man first trangressed the Divine law, the terraqueous globe was cursed for his sake; it underwent a great physical change in its constitution, to render it a fit abode for a fallen, instead of a sinless creature. But now that the curse of sin is removed, and the redeemed portion of the race is delivered from its dominion and power, and is rendered capable of enjoying everlasting life, it is needful that the earth should also have the curse removed from it, and that it should be again rendered a fit habitation for immortals. To this end it is quite as necessary that its heaven, or atmosphere, should be renovated, as that the curse of unfruitfulness should be removed from the ground; for at present the atmosphere is impregnated with the seeds of disease and death. But the new atmosphere must needs be so pure as to contain no insalubrious ingredient whatever. That the antediluvian atmosphere was more healthful than the present may be inferred from the comparative longevity of the antediluvian patriarchs; and the new atmosphere may as greatly surpass the antediluvian, as the latter excelled the present.

From the circumstance of the apostle's designating the world thus presented to his sight as 'new,' and from the clear intimation he gives that it replaced the old, it is evident that this new heaven and new earth do not yet exist, and cannot come into existence until the present heaven and earth pass away; seeing that the new is to be formed out of the materials of the old. There is a critical nicety in the language of the original bearing upon this point. In the received text, the verb employed to describe the passing away of the old system means rather 'giving place to,' and involves the idea of exchange. Griesbach, however, disputes this reading, and contends

for the verb denoting simple departure, a reading in which he is supported by Lachmann and Alford, but not by Bloomfield. No argument, therefore, can be built on this phraseology. The sense is evident from the apostle's assigning the removal of the old world as a reason for the appearance of the new, which he does very distinctly. However the question may stand, therefore, as regards the verb, there can be no doubt that the idea of substitution is involved in the general turn of the expression.

The new heaven and the new earth seen by St. John, then, are evidently the same new heaven and new earth which St. Peter says we expect, according to the Divine promise. Now if we search for this promise, we shall find it recorded in St. John xiv. 2, 3: 'I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.' This new heaven and new earth, then, is the place which Christ thus declares himself to have gone to prepare for us; and this is the promise to which St. Peter alludes. It is evident, from the words of our Saviour, that the place to which he refers was not prepared at the time he spoke, otherwise it would have been unnecessary for him to depart in order to engage in its preparation. We may not hence conclude, however, that its preparation is now actually in progress; for the old world must be reduced to chaos before the new one can be elaborated out of its materials. The necessity for Christ's departure, in order to prepare this place for the redeemed, consisted in this. It was needful that His human mind should be, as it were, blended with the Divine mind in its ubiquity and omnipotence, in order that His human nature might cooperate with the Divine Nature in the great work of

re-creating the world out of the chaos into which it is destined to relapse.[1]

But the promise of Christ does not end with the assurance that He was going to prepare a place for us. He adds a still more precious promise: 'I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.' Now this expression 'come again' plainly involves the idea of a return to this globe, so confirming the conclusion that this globe is to be itself the place which Christ is going to prepare. Were it otherwise—were the place He was going to prepare some far distant orb—it would not be needful, in order to our being with Him, that He should come back to the earth; all that would be requisite would be our translation to that distant paradise. But the eternal union between Christ and His redeemed church is to be effected, not by our going to Him, but by His coming to us. This view is more clearly established by what follows.

Thus no one can emerge from *hades* and be introduced into the presence of Christ, by being transported into some distant and unknown region; but all must wait and continue in *hades* till the fulness of time shall arrive, when Christ is to return to this earth, to receive us unto Himself; not, however, to this earth, as now constituted, but to this globe reconstructed and prepared to be a fitting abode, both for Him and His redeemed people, who are to inherit it for evermore. By this promise Christ confirms His benediction on the meek: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.' None shall possess that new earth, who are not graced with 'the meekness and gentleness of Christ.'

[1] In the expression which occurs in Matt. xxv. 34, 'inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,' the word 'kingdom' refers not to a place, but to a state—to that condition of eternal happiness, under the immediate government of their Divine King, which was from the foundation of human society prepared for the redeemed.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

HAVING intimated his discovery that the heaven and earth now presented before his mental eye were new, and had replaced the old, the apostle proceeds to describe a fresh and magnificent emblem which met his enraptured gaze (v. 2.): 'And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.' His imagination appears to have been so completely captivated by this splendid vision, that he does not at first stop to narrate the manner of his seeing it, and the accompanying circumstances. These he indicates at a later period; but in this verse he, as it were, hastens to tell that he saw the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven. The introduction of his name, 'and I John saw,' &c., appears intended merely for impressiveness. Griesbach considers it of doubtful authority.

That the city thus presented to the mental vision of the apostle, is an emblem, few will be disposed to doubt. The very terms in which it is afterwards described exclude the possibility of its being a real city, either now existing, or that ever can exist. At the same time it may not be disputed that St. John accurately describes what he saw, and that the spiritual idea intended to be symbolized was actually presented before him in the form of this emblematical city.

Then comes the question, of what is it an emblem? On this point we are not left to conjecture; for we find the city afterwards called 'the bride, the Lamb's wife,' which was the well-known appellation of the redeemed church. This city is thus pointed out as being that 'building fitly framed together,' which is 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,' and of which 'Christ is the head corner-stone.' The representation of the universal church of the redeemed in the future state, under the emblem of a city, was so familiar to the minds of the apostles, that we find frequent allusions to it in their writings, and there can therefore be no reasonable grounds for doubting that this is the true meaning of the emblem here employed. The new Jerusalem is accordingly to be regarded as a type, not of the future abode of the redeemed, but of the redeemed themselves viewed as a corporate body—a great and holy structure composed of living stones.

The point that first demands our attention is the circumstance of the apostle's seeing the symbolical city coming down from God out of heaven. This metaphor has not improbably a twofold meaning. It may denote that all the gifts and graces by which the members of the redeemed church are distinguished from the lost, come down to them from God out of heaven, they being thus 'born again, not of corruptible seed, but by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.' These gifts and graces, having come from God, may, by a figure, be replaced by those who possess them, and who are accordingly said to have themselves come down from God out of heaven—being, as it were, heaven-born.

There is, however, another more literal, yet more recondite sense, in which the corporate body of the redeemed may be accurately described, as coming down from God out of heaven; but in order to understand the

allusion, it is needful to refer to St. Paul's description of the general resurrection, as given in 1 Thes. iv. 14 to 17: 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not come before them that are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'

It will be observed that St. Paul here speaks of that portion of the redeemed who were dead at the time he wrote, as being not in heaven, in the active enjoyment of the immediate presence of Christ, but as being asleep in Jesus. They are asleep—quite unconscious of their existence—but still asleep in Jesus, under His protection and care, and sure of a blessed resurrection at His final coming. These he says God will bring with Him. When He comes in the person of Christ to judge the world, then all who are asleep shall awake to new life and come with Him.

The persons of whom the apostle here more immediately speaks are those who had died before Christ came into the world, and concerning whose fate the early Christian converts appear to have entertained strong doubts and misgivings. St. Paul writes to reassure their minds. He intimates to them, that notwithstanding their dear friends had died before the coming of Christ, yet if their characters were such as he describes in Romans ii. 13, 14 and 15, they might be confidently regarded as being asleep in Christ.

St. Paul then contrasts their position with that of

himself and those whom he is addressing. In the original the meaning of the phraseology he employs is clearer than it is in our translation. He says: 'For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we, those living, those surviving unto the manifestation of the Lord, shall not have precedence over those who are asleep.' When we render the passage thus literally, it is plain that the apostle speaks of himself and of those whom he addressed as being then alive, and having survived the period of the manifestation of the Lord, in allusion not to His second, but to His first advent. Had it been to Christ's second coming he had referred, he would have used the future tense and said, 'We who shall be alive, and who shall survive unto the coming of the Lord.' But he uses the present tense as applying to himself and those to whom he wrote, who were then alive, and so had remained to see the day of the manifestation of Christ, as contradistinguished from those who had died before that great event.

It cannot be supposed that the apostle should have fallen into such an error as to imagine that either he himself, or those whom he addressed, should be alive at the time of Christ's second coming. On the contrary, there is evidence in his own writings to show that he was fully aware that he himself should glorify his Master by a martyr's death. Nor will it do to suppose him to have written these words in ignorance; for he expressly states that he speaks them 'by the word of the Lord.' To say therefore that St. Paul imagined that the second coming of Christ was to take place during the lifetime of himself or of any of those whom he addressed, would be to undermine his authority as an inspired teacher, and to reduce all that he has said on the subject of the resurrection to mere expressions of his private opinion, as likely to be wrong as right. He claims divine authority for this

averment more pointedly than for most others which he makes.

Neither will it do to imagine St. Paul to have believed that he and those to whom he wrote shall re-appear on the earth, so as to be alive at the second coming of Christ. His language expressly excludes such a notion; for he says that he himself and those whom he addressed shall not come before those who were asleep; while of such he affirms, that God shall bring them with Him.

There is thus left no reasonable interpretation that can be put on the words 'We, those living, those surviving unto the manifestation of the Lord,' save that already given—namely, that they refer to the first advent of Christ; and that the apostle speaks of himself and those whom he addressed as being, at the moment he wrote, alive, and as having remained till after Christ first came into the world.

St. Paul then proceeds to describe the manner of our Lord's descent from heaven; and in doing so he confirms the views previously propounded, that we are not to be removed to some distant locality in order to our union with Christ, but that He is to descend from heaven to us, that we may be ever with Him.

The apostle then intimates that on our Lord's making his appearance in the heavens, but before He actually reaches the earth, those who had already died in Christ shall rise first; next 'we living and remaining'—that is, all 'we who are now on the earth.[1] He thus indicates that each man shall rise in the order of his decease; but the succession may be so rapid as to be almost equivalent to simultaneousness.[1] Then all the redeemed in one great

[1] In the mean wave of light, there are 500 billions of successive vibrations in a second. This shows how rapid may be a succession without absolute simultaneousness.

body, whatever may be the period of their living and dying on the earth, having thus risen into new life, 'shall be caught up in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.' Our translation obscures the meaning here, by introducing before the word 'clouds' the definite article, which is absent in the original. Its omission indicates that the apostle here uses the term 'clouds' in the same sense as that in which it occurs in Heb. xii. 1—to convey an idea of the immense masses, resembling clouds, in which the redeemed shall ascend.

We have it thus intimated that the general resurrection is to take place, while Christ is descending from heaven, on His way to take up His permanent abode on the renovated earth. It may hence be gathered that the general judgment shall not be a work of time. The flashes of conviction, which shall pass through the mind of each individual, on emerging from *hades*, shall be instantaneous. Those whose convictions shall condemn them, shall see their Lord and Judge afar off. They shall have no desire to meet Him, but on the contrary shall shrink from His approach, and having once obtained a glimpse of His majesty, and feeling their utter inability to stand before Him, they shall even court that second death which is to banish them from His presence.

With the redeemed, however, it shall be far otherwise. Their convictions and feelings will, with equal instantaneousness, indicate to them the approval of their Judge. They will hail His approach with delight, and feel a strong desire to go up to welcome His arrival—a desire which shall be fully gratified. They shall be uplifted to meet their Lord in the air, and shall descend along with Him to the renovated earth, there to remain for ever enjoying the light of his countenance.

This digression enables us clearly to perceive how it is that, in the vision presented to the mental eye of St.

John, the New Jerusalem appeared to come down out of heaven. The church of the redeemed cannot be complete without the immediate presence of its Great Head. The building fitly framed together must have its chief corner-stone. Now the union between Christ and the redeemed, we are assured by St. Paul, is to take place in the air, while the Lord is yet on His way down to the earth. The redeemed church, as a complete body, will accordingly descend from heaven to earth; and hence it is that the emblematical city also appeared to St. John to come down from God out of heaven.

The seer adds that this great city 'was prepared as a bride for her husband.' It is remarkable that he thus at once blends the metaphors of 'the great city' and 'the bride, the Lamb's wife.' He does not affirm that the great city was like a vast mansion prepared for its lord and his household, but it was prepared as a bride for her husband; thus clearly pointing out the emblematical character of the city, and showing that it represents, not the abode of the redeemed, but the redeemed church itself as a corporate body, which is thus said to be prepared as a bride for her husband, in allusion to the immediate union of the Church to her Lord. The preparation like that of a bride, involves the ideas both of purification and adornment; while of the Eastern practice in those matters we have a minute description in the book of Esther. The church is thus represented as being cleansed from all impurities and adorned with every virtue.

The proclamation made by a voice from heaven strongly and beautifully confirms the foregoing views (verses 3 and 4): 'And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and He, God, shall be with them their God: and God shall wipe

away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall sorrow, nor crying, nor pain be any more, because former things are passed away.' This rendering is somewhat more literal than that given in the authorised version. The speaker points, as it were, to the glorious emblem of the New Jerusalem, and exclaims, 'Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He shall dwell with them.' This language confirms the assurance previously given by Christ to His disciples, that, in order to His reunion with them, they shall not be transported to some distant region, to be introduced to His presence, but that He shall return to this earth, to take up His permanent abode with the redeemed portion of the human race, to be among them a present manifestation of the Deity. By the tabernacle of God, then, we are to understand the person of Christ who is the true temple, the sole medium through which God is pleased to manifest Himself to mankind, and to hold intercourse with them. For 'no man hath seen God at any time, nor can see Him; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father'—imbued with all His feelings and sentiments, and a partaker of His omniscience—'He hath revealed Him,' and will reveal Him still more clearly in the future state.

Thus manifested in the person of Christ, we are assured that God is to take up His abode with men; that they are to be His immediate people, and that He is to dwell with them, not as formerly, either through the medium of a mere symbol, or in the humble guise of the Son of Man, but as their peculiar God—the sole manifestation among them of the omnipresent Deity.

It must be evident to every reflecting mind, that the Divine Presence being equally diffused throughout the entire universe, it is absolutely necessary to the perceptible presence of the Deity with any of His rational

creatures, that there should be employed a medium, by which such peculiar presence may be in some manner limited and defined. It is not improbable that in every orb throughout the universe, which may be the abode of intelligent creatures, who have not fallen from their allegiance to the Supreme Ruler, He may manifest His presence with them through such a medium, and that in each case the medium may be an organism resembling that of the intelligent creatures themselves, which will of course be adapted to the physical constitution of the orb in which they dwell. In the case of our globe, the medium of this perceptible Divine Presence is to be the glorified human nature of Christ, who is to dwell among mankind and be ever present with them as their peculiar God. He shall be the sole medium through which we shall hold intercourse with the Deity, and through which His presence shall be rendered perceptible to us. He will be, in one word, our 'Emmanuel.'

CHAPTER V.

THE REDEEMED CHURCH.

THE brief description of the happiness of the redeemed church in the future state, already quoted, although its terms are all negative, is peculiarly impressive. It speaks not of the delights to be enjoyed; these it leaves to the imagination; but it tells us that weeping and death, and sorrow and crying and pain, are all to be removed from the society of the redeemed; because 'old things are passed away.' These particulars indicate, in the clearest manner, that the New Jerusalem is a type of the church in the future state, and not the emblem of a purer church in the world that now subsists. The latter idea would be a lamentable degradation of this beautiful symbol, and would render the description before us nothing but a false and inflated hyperbole. Understood as applicable to the future life, the phraseology here employed is beautiful and appropriate; but if applied to any phase of human society in the present life, there is no sense, either outer or inner, physical or spiritual, in which it can be regarded as true.

The accuracy of this view is confirmed by the solemn assurances contained in the next verse (the 5th): 'And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new! and He said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.' The former voice which the apostle had heard he described simply as a voice from

heaven—probably from his not having clearly perceived who was the speaker; but now, he is addressed directly by the glorious occupant of the throne Himself, who says, 'Behold I make all things new!'—not a new revelation, or a new church, but all things—a new heaven, a new earth, a new and deathless body for the human soul, new and enlarged powers for the human mind, and a new, happy, and ever-progressing state of glorified human society.

To this solemn asseveration the Divine Speaker calls special attention, so as to indicate the enlarged and important sense in which His words are to be understood: 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' They are not only true, but they constitute a faithful promise, which shall be certainly performed by Him who is faithful and true.

In the next three verses the speaker continues to be the Occupant of the throne (verses 6, 7, 8): 'And He said unto me, It is done; I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son; but the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.'

The words 'It is done,' which commence this striking passage, seem intended to indicate that the great scheme for the redemption of mankind, and for ensuring the everlasting happiness of the redeemed portion of the race, is, at the time to which the vision refers, fully accomplished. This circumstance strengthens the evidence that this part of the vision relates, not to any events that are to occur during the temporal system of the

world, but to what is to happen at the commencement of the future and eternal state.

By the next phrase, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,' this speaker, who now occupies the throne, identifies Himself with Him who addressed St. John at the very outset of the vision, and who then appeared standing among the seven golden candlesticks. Thus all doubt is removed, that He who occupies the throne is Christ Himself. This phrase, 'I am Alpha and Omega,' would be greatly misunderstood were we to consider it as affirmed of duration of existence. Its peculiar form seems designed to exclude that idea, which would have been sufficiently explained by saying 'I am the first and the last.' But this resort to the letters of the Greek alphabet shows that quite another meaning is involved. It is plainly impossible to hold Christ to be the last of all beings as respects duration, without supposing that every other being in the universe is ultimately to become extinct—a conclusion wholly inconsistent with the eternity of existence promised to the redeemed. The introduction of the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet, then, appears to denote that of the written word, which is composed of that alphabet, Christ is the beginning and the end. It all relates to Him, and is all designed to unfold to man the scheme of redemption through Him; while He is Himself emphatically 'the Word of God,' as being the sole medium through which the thoughts of the Divine Mind are made known to man. The written word being the record of what He has thus revealed, Christ may with all truth be said to be its Alpha and its Omega, its beginning and its end. It is He who, through the medium of that word, has brought life and immortality to light; and He here confirms it by a precious promise, 'I will give to

him who is athirst to drink of the fountain of the water of life freely.'

It is encouraging to observe that no other qualification is required for receiving this water of life than being 'athirst'—that is, having a strong desire for eternal life; a life not only of happiness, but also of holiness, without which true happiness cannot exist. To him, therefore, who desires to lead a holy life, entirely in accordance with the will of God—who mourns the imperfections of his present attainments, and ardently desires a greater conformity to the mind and image of Christ—to him will He give to drink of the fountain of the water of life freely.

This double metaphor, 'the fountain of the water of life,' is one of great beauty. It not only represents the holiness and happiness of the future life under the figure of water, given to the thirsty and wayworn traveller, without which he would die, and which is therefore to him emphatically the water of life; but it also represents it as welling up from a perpetual fountain, to denote that the supply is pure and inexhaustible. It is further worthy of remark that the soul which is athirst is invited to drink of this water directly from the fountain-head—not from any channel or cistern, by which its purity might be contaminated, as it too often is in the present life, but directly from the spring—from Christ Himself. And from this fountain he that is athirst is invited to drink freely; he has nothing wherewith to purchase it; for as man brought nothing into this world, so he can take nothing out. He is therefore invited to drink freely, without money and without price; for the right to drink has been purchased for him by the Occupant of the throne, who now offers to him the refreshing draught. There is in these words an evident allusion to what our Saviour said to the woman of Samaria, with whom He

discoursed at Jacob's well: 'Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.' John iv. 13, 14.

In the next verse the promise is made 'to him that overcometh.' There is here an allusion to a struggle and a victory. It is the victory of the spiritual over the natural man, between which two there is, during the whole of the present life, a perpetual warfare. He that overcometh himself, subduing his fleshly lusts, and the spirit of selfishness and deceptiveness inherent in his nature, even he shall inherit the blessing. This phrase may at first sight appear inconsistent with the preceding, in which the blessing is offered to him that is simply athirst. The discrepancy, however, is only apparent; for as no man becomes physically thirsty except by hardship and fatigue, so no man can become spiritually thirsty after holiness unless he strive to obtain the victory over himself. In man's nature there is no implanted desire to become holy; quite the reverse; there is an inborn inherited appetite for sinful and selfish indulgences, and an inherent propensity to deceive; and these must be overcome before the thirst for holiness can be felt. He that is athirst, therefore, and is permitted to drink of the water of life freely, is the same with him that overcometh—that gains the victory over himself.

There is a slight discrepancy in the reading of what follows in verse 7. Griesbach, Bloomfield, Alford, and the best editors, generally have 'inherit these things,' instead of 'inherit all things.' This reading has the advantage of rendering the phrase more striking and pointed; for the apostle has exhibited symbolically before his eyes the things which the victor is to inherit.

The next clause confirms the views already suggested

in regard to God's dwelling among men in the person of Christ; for the speaker, by calling Himself the Alpha and the Omega, has identified Himself with the first speaker at the outset of the apocalyptic vision, who declares Himself to have been 'He that liveth and was dead, and who is alive for evermore.' There can thus be no doubt that, in both cases, the speaker was Christ; and here He says of him that overcometh, 'I will be his God, and he shall be my son.' Hence it is plain that Christ is to be the peculiar God of the redeemed—God ever present with them, and accessible to them—the perceptible medium of the presence of Him whose presence is illimitable. The expression 'he shall be my son,' further indicates that the redeemed shall regard their Divine King as representing the Father, as being the sole medium through which they can discern the Father. They shall then fully understand the import of those words which Christ spoke while yet on earth, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.'

It is probably in allusion to this change in the relation in which the redeemed shall regard themselves as standing to their Divine King, that St. Paul uses the remarkable expressions contained in 1 Cor. xv. 28: 'And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.' That is, the redeemed shall no longer regard their king as a son, and themselves as His brethren, but they shall lose sight of His Sonship in the idea of His Fatherhood, as being the representative among them of the Universal Father; and while He shall look upon them as His sons, they will regard Him as equivalently their Father.

The next verse (the 8th) announces the doom of the wicked; and it is remarkable that, while the redeemed are simply described as they who are athirst, and who

overcome, the various characters who are to be consigned to punishment are enumerated with great fulness and exactness. This category requires no explanation, and may be left to make its own impression.

'The lake which burneth with fire and brimstone' is here again designated by Christ as being 'the second death,' thus showing that this phrase was not an explanation of the apostle's own, but that it was given by Christ Himself for the purpose of indicating the metaphorical character of the expression 'lake of fire.'

In the 9th verse the apostle commences his detailed description of the New Jerusalem, first giving the particulars of the manner in which it was shown to him: 'And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.' It is not improbable that the cardinal number 'one' is here used by a Hebraism for the ordinal. and that we should understand the apostle to mean the first of the angels who had the seven vials—the same who came to show him the great prostitute. There would seem to be a peculiar propriety in the same angel who showed John the false prostitute that pretended to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, being now selected to show him the true bride. It will be remembered that on the first angel's pouring forth his vial, the worshippers of the beast were affected with a grievous boil—an emblem which means the outward manifestation of a grievous spiritual malady under which the worshippers of the beast were labouring. The same angel now comes to show John that the true bride is without spot or blemish in the sight of God—that she is all glorious, both without and within.

The great city, the New Jerusalem's being called the bride, the Lamb's wife, is a clear indication that the city

is an emblem, not of the abode of the blessed, but of the society of the redeemed themselves, who constitute the true Church, which is 'the bride, the Lamb's wife.' It further renders it plain that the New Jerusalem does not represent any church that now exists, or ever can exist, during the temporal state; for any such must be composed of fallible men, and cannot possess that perfect purity which is here indicated as belonging to the true bride.

The double emblem of the bride and the New Jerusalem obviously corresponds to the double emblem of the prostitute and the great city Babylon: the latter signifying the great body of the adherents to the corrupt system of Christianity, the former the great body of the adherents to Christianity in its purest, simplest form—to 'the simplicity that is in Christ;' not, however, to this body of true disciples in their present imperfect state, but to their complete number, when ingathered in the future state, and purified from all their imperfections. This idea of completeness and perfection is further developed in the sequel.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEASUREMENT OF THE CITY.

THE apostle proceeds to state (v. 10): 'And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.' St. John here again, as at the outset, cautions us against the idea of his having been actually transported in space to any distant locality in the course of his vision. It was 'in the spirit,' that is, in imagination, or subjectively, that he was taken to this exceeding high mountain. This feature of a great and high mountain in the new earth, indicates that its general aspect shall not greatly differ from that of the old: that it shall present the same diversified surface of mountain and valley, hill and dale. The very circumstance of the apostle's distinguishing this mountain as being great and high, points to the conclusion that there were other mountains smaller and lower within his field of view, and that it was in comparison with them that he describes this one as of surpassing size and height. The apostle's being spiritually uplifted to this lofty eminence seems to have been designed for the purpose of enabling him to see the vast extent of the holy city, more distinctly than he could have done by remaining on the plains. He varies his appellation of the city in this passage, by calling it 'the great city, the holy Jerusalem,' instead of 'the holy city, New Jerusalem,' as at first; thus indicating the vastness of its extent, as well as its peculiar sanctity. He repeats the

assertion of its coming down out of heaven from God, an expression the import of which has been already considered.

St. John next proceeds to give a minute description of the wondrous spectacle that met his admiring gaze. He first describes the city as 'having the glory of God.' There appears to be here an allusion to the *shechinah* or luminous symbol of the Divine Presence, which was displayed in the inner sanctuary of the ancient temple. But we ought perhaps rather to understand the apostle to mean, more generally, that the city was irradiated with the glory of the Divine Presence, as manifested in the person of Christ. See 2 Cor. iv. 6, and Titus ii. 13.

The seer proceeds to say, 'And her splendour was like a very precious stone, like a jasper-stone, crystallised.' This rendering is more literal than that of the authorised version. From this description it is evident that the jasper, to which the apostle here compares the splendour of the city, is not the dull red stone to which we now give that name, but a brilliant transparent gem of great value, having a similar red colour. It is not improbable that the oriental ruby may be the stone which he thus indicates; for of all the gems of that colour, it is the most precious, and the most remarkable for the purity of its tint. This description of the lustre of the city, as it first appeared to the apostle, is very curious—more especially when compared with what he afterwards affirms of its general aspect, which he describes as 'of pure gold, like clear glass.' The explanation of this apparent discrepancy is to be found in the circumstance, which he afterwards mentions, that the wall of the city was of jasper. Hence it is evident that, when first seen by him, the city was still in the course of its descent from heaven; and when he, in imagination, attained the top of the high mountain, it was still far above his head. Hence all the

light, passing down to him from the city, would seem to traverse the wall of jasper; so that the whole would appear to him tinged with a bright red hue. This circumstance strengthens the conclusion that the gem which he calls 'jasper crystallised' was not opaque, but highly transparent and lustrous, like the ruby.

The apostle continues his description by saying that 'the city had a wall great and high'—another proof that, when first seen, the city must have been above his point of sight, so that the wall should have appeared to him 'great and high;' for its height, as afterwards given, although really great, is nevertheless insignificant compared with that of the city itself. It was doubtless a great and lofty wall; but it would not have appeared so to the eye of the apostle, had he been looking down upon it from the top of the mountain.

This wall, he adds, 'Had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written upon them, which are those of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel—on the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates; and the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.' The consideration of the meaning of these particulars must be deferred till we proceed a little further with the description. Meanwhile, it is worthy of observation that the four cardinal points, east and west, north and south, remain in the new world as in the old. Now these were, in the time of the apostle, determined solely by the apparent position of the heavenly bodies; whence it may be fairly inferred, that although the globe seemed to have undergone so great a change as to entitle it to the appellation of 'a new heaven and a new earth,' yet the other orbs in the universe were not affected by that

change; and the position of the terraqueous globe in the starry heavens remained unaltered.

The next verse contains a curious and important statement (verse 15): 'And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.' It is well known that all ancient edifices of symmetrical form were regulated in their construction by a certain *model*, which constituted the unit of measurement, and determined all the proportions of the different parts. It is therefore highly probable that this great city was apparently constructed on this plan, and that the golden reed which the angel held in his hand was the model or unit of measurement, which regulated all the dimensions and proportions, every part measured by the angel being an exact number of models. This probability is strengthened by the statement that the angel had the reed for the express purpose of showing the apostle the precise dimensions of the city and its wall. We accordingly learn from the sequel that the angel actually proceeded to measure, with this reed, the various parts of the city before the apostle, who thus acquired a distinct knowledge of their several dimensions. These being recorded by him in *stadia*, or furlongs, and cubits, it is plain that the angel must in the first instance have shown him in some manner the exact length of the reed which he employed as a standard. Now St. John states with great precision that the cubit of which he speaks in this admeasurement was 'according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.' It is therefore highly probable that the angel showed him the length of the reed according to his own cubit; that is, the distance from his elbow-joint to the point of his middle finger, and that the reed was either one or a certain definite number of those cubits. The latter is the more probable supposition, for the dimensions to be ascertained were so great,

that a reed of only one cubit would have been a very inadequate instrument for the admeasurement.

Now, as the ruling number in all the dimensions is 12, there is a strong probability that the length of the reed was 12 cubits, or about 18 feet. This length may accordingly be assumed in the meantime, leaving the probability to acquire strength from what follows.

In the next verse the apostle describes the actual measurement of the city by the angel. (Verse 16): 'And the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.' The first point for consideration here is the length of the standard—the furlong or *stadium*. The relation between the ancient stadium and the cubit varied considerably in different places; but from the circumstance that the reed of the angel was used to determine both cubits and stadia, it appears highly probable that, while the reed was an exact number of cubits, the stadium was an exact number of reeds or models. Now the nearest approach to the general length of the stadium would be 36 models, or 432 cubits; and this number has the advantage of involving, as a multiple, the number 12, which is evidently the ruling number of all the dimensions. The length and breadth of the city, being 12,000 stadia, would be 432,000 models, or exactly one thousand times the relation of the cubit to the stadium. This length is about 1,472 miles. These dimensions, more especially when applied to the height, at once exclude the idea that this was a real city.

The next question that presents itself for consideration is, What was the actual form of the city, as here described? At first sight it would appear to be a perfect cube; but a little reflection will show that this conclusion must be erroneous. A perfect cube 1,472 miles high

could not have the least approach to the appearance of a city. We are presently informed that the wall, although previously described as great and high, was only 144 cubits in height—a dimension altogether insignificant compared with the height of the city itself.

Now, had the city been a perfect cube, this wall of 144 cubits could not have been distinguished from the general mass. We are thus forced to the conclusion that the form of the city was, not the cube, but the pyramid with a square base—a figure which would admit of a perpendicular wall being clearly distinguishable. This figure would present the appearance of a city set upon a hill; and it will be remembered that this is a metaphor which our Saviour Himself applied to His church: 'Ye are the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.' There is another reason for preferring the pyramid to the cube. Our Saviour is called the chief corner-stone of the great building, and also the chief or head of the corner. Now it is only in the pyramid that there is one chief corner-stone, forming the apex of the figure. The cube has four upper corners; nor is there in a cubical building any one stone which could be called 'chief of the corner.' The cube, moreover although a perfect geometrical figure, may yet be increased in height, with no other effect than its conversion into a six-sided prism; but the pyramid, once completed, by having placed on it the apex or chief corner-stone, cannot receive any further additions; it is then a perfect figure, which cannot be either added to, or taken from, without destruction to its symmetry. It is hence by much the more fitting emblem for the redeemed church which, in the future state, will be complete in all its members, and be crowned by the presence of its Great Head. After that consummation, no member can either be added to it or taken from it; it must remain fixed in its components and constitution

for ever. In the sequel, moreover, it will be found that the pyramid offers several other advantages over the cube, in explaining the general description of the city; but enough has been said in the meantime to entitle the pyramid to the preference as a first assumption.

Nor must we lose sight of the idea of the city's being built on a hill, as suggested by the words of our Saviour. It would be an incongruous notion to suppose a pyramid, in its solidity, to represent a city; for a solid pyramid would have as little resemblance to a city as would a solid cube. But we are to regard the great bulk of the pyramid as being the hill on which the city stands—incrusting as it were the whole of its surface. This appearance would be presented were the city composed of one continuous street, or rather row of buildings, winding down the four sides of the pyramid, by a very gentle slope, from its apex to its base; so that the buildings would have the appearance of being erected in terraces one over another. This is the only idea of its construction that will tally with the rest of the description, as given in the sequel of the narrative; and it may therefore be well at once to fix this conception in our minds.

CHAPTER VII.

MEANING OF THE MEASUREMENT.

WITH respect to the measurement of the city, which the angel made before the apostle, this proceeding must evidently have had some significant design. The pyramidal form of the city was an emblem of the perfection and completeness of the redeemed church; but it was further necessary to convey to the mind of the apostle some idea of the vast magnitude of the ingathered multitude, of whom this church was composed; and the most natural mode of doing so was to point out to him, in a clear manner, the vast dimensions of the city, symbolizing that multitude. On a former occasion, the redeemed church had been presented to his eye as 'a great multitude which no man could number,' and the enormous dimensions assigned to the city point to the same conclusion.

It has been shown that the city probably occupied only the surface of the pyramidal mountain on which it appeared to be built; consequently, in his measurement, the angel might be expected to give such elements as would enable the apostle easily to determine the superficial extent of the pyramid, and hence the area of the city. The angel therefore gives him the length of the side of the square base, and the height of the pyramid; but it is probable that, in exhibiting this latter dimension, he applied his reed to the centre of the sloping side of the figure; for is would be difficult, by means of a reed, to give a correct

idea of the perpendicular height measured directly from the apex to the base. Besides, to determine the superficial extent of a pyramid from the length of the base and the perpendicular height is a troublesome process; whereas it is quite easy to ascertain it from knowing the length of the base, and that of the sloping side, measured from the base to the apex; the rule being that this latter dimension, multiplied into twice the former, gives the area of the four triangular sides of the pyramid. Thus, in the present case, the area of these four sides is 288 millions of square stadia—equivalent to somewhat more than four and a quarter millions of square miles.

This enormous superficial area doubtless conveys the idea of an immense number of citizens—a multitude which no man could number. But the act of measurement appears to convey the further idea that the number, though vast, is fixed and determined. That this should be the case will excite no surprise. The globe itself being of limited dimensions and capacity for sustaining organic life, there must obviously be a limit beyond which the number of inhabitants that could live for ever on its surface in happiness and comfort cannot extend. To this limit we may feel assured the number of the redeemed will be carried, but no further.

When God first created the terraqueous globe, and placed on it man as its destined inhabitant, He must have adapted the one to the other, and have fixed the number of intelligent inhabitants, as well as their nature. But the Creator having seen fit to endow man with reason and free will—so rendering it *possible* for him to disobey the Divine will—the designs of the Deity, with respect to mankind, could not be otherwise than alternative. There were two contingencies to be provided for: the one, that of man's preserving his innocence; the other, that of his falling from his allegiance to his Creator. The

issue of these two alternatives was incapable of being foreknown as a certainty, because it was in itself essentially an uncertainty—depending on the manner in which a created mind, acting as a subordinate first cause, should exercise the gift of free will with which it had been endowed.

It was further necessary that the Deity should adapt His plan to both branches of the alternative. His general design was that the earth should be the permanent abode of man, and that there should be such a number of mankind as the earth was capable of sustaining in everlasting comfort and happiness.

But in this general design it was needful to embrace two alternatives. Had man preserved his innocence, the attainment of the end would have been easy. The race would have multiplied by slow degrees, until it had reached its limit; after which all further multiplication would have ceased. But as it was from the first possible that man might fall, it was needful to provide for the earth's being replenished with inhabitants, on the emergence of that event. One mode of accomplishing this end would have been to have annihilated the disobedient creature, and to have created another and another, till one should be found who should successfully pass through the trial of obedience, to which it is needful that every free-will agent should be subjected, in order to the exercise of his freedom.

This would have been the easiest and most obvious course; but it was not that which Infinite Wisdom saw fit to adopt. The Almighty Ruler resolved on a far more difficult mode of attaining His end; but one, from the very difficulty in which it was involved, redounding so much the more to the glory of His wisdom and power. This course was to provide a method of restoration from the evil effects of man's first transgression—a method which

should be open to all who might be willing to be so restored. For this purpose it was needful that the scheme should be so adapted to man's moral nature, as to render it certain that some at least of the race, in the exercise of their free will, should willingly avail themselves of its benefits. Then all that was further requisite was to ordain that the race should be continually multiplied, until the proportion, thus willing to be redeemed, should amount to that definite number which God originally destined as that of the earth's permanent rational inhabitants.

With a view to expedite this consummation, however, the benign Creator appears to have further decreed that the larger proportion of those born into the world should die in childhood, actual or virtual, and that all such should be among the number of the redeemed. Hence the spirit of prophecy renders praise to Him in these words: 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength, because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still (or cause to cease) the enemy and the avenger' (Ps. viii. 2). And our Saviour Himself, speaking of young children, says, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' It is manifest, however, that this part of the plan could not be carried beyond a certain limit, and that it was necessary for a large, although not the larger proportion of the race, to attain the adult state, so as to continue the multiplication of the species. Of adults it is to be feared—from the words of our Saviour, 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it'—only the minority will be found willing to be redeemed. Still, it is consolatory to think that, of the race at large, the greater proportion will be rescued from the dominion and power of moral evil.

According to this scheme, then, the human race shall be continually multiplied, until the definite number of

the renovated earth's future and permanent inhabitants be completed; and the greater the number of those existing at any one time in the present world, who may be brought to accept of the redemption secured by Christ, and offered to all, the sooner will this great end be accomplished. Hence the advent of the everlasting kingdom of God is represented in Scripture as an event which may be hastened by human co-operation; and Christ Himself teaches all His followers to pray, 'Thy kingdom come.' This desire we shall find afterwards referred to and reiterated at the conclusion of this prophecy.

While the pyramidal form of the symbolical city and its measurement thus conveyed the general idea of the completeness of the great body of the redeemed—of the vastness of the multitude constituting that body, and of the definiteness of the number of that multitude—the question naturally occurs to the mind, 'May not the measurement made by the angel in some way indicate that precise number itself?' The object of the measurement was evidently to convey to the apostle's mind some notion of the immensity of this number; but such an idea of mere vastness might have been imparted in a less definite form. The particularity of the measurement seems to have some further end; and none appears so probable as that it was intended to intimate, in a covert manner, the exact number of the redeemed.

If such be the intention, the most reasonable conclusion is, that the reed of the angel is the standard, or model, according to which the estimate is to be made, and that the amount indicated will correspond to the number of square models, in the area of the surface of the pyramid, which, as already pointed out, alone constituted the city.

The probability of this view is strengthened by a reference to the parallel case of the temple seen in vision by

Ezekiel, the dimensions of which were in like manner minutely indicated, by an angel measuring them with a reed. In that instance the little chambers appropriated to the officiating priests were each one reed square. Now St. Peter declares that every member of the redeemed church is to be regarded as an officiating priest, a lively stone in God's spiritual house. It is therefore probable that in the New Jerusalem the little chamber assigned to each of these priests, ordained to offer spiritual sacrifices, is in like manner a reed square; consequently, that the number of square reeds corresponds to the number of this spiritual priesthood.

In the case of Ezekiel's vision, the length of the angel's reed is specially mentioned as being six cubits, 'according to the cubit, and handbreadth.' But in the measurement made by the angel in the presence of St. John, the standard was a cubit 'according to the measure of a man'—that is, the length from the elbow-joint to the point of the middle finger, or about eighteen inches. The question remains, whether the reed was six of these latter cubits or twelve? but the circumstance that twelve is the ruling number in all the measurements throws a strong preponderance of probability in favour of that number, a preponderance strengthened by what immediately follows. Assuming then, in the meantime, the length of the reed to be twelve cubits, and supposing the relation of the cubit to the stadium to have been rightly assumed at 432, then, in 288 millions of square stadia, the superficial area of the pyramid, the number of square models will be 373,248 millions; and this would be the number of the redeemed represented by this emblem. Thus, reckoning the present population of the globe at about 1,200 millions, the number of the redeemed would be in round numbers about 311 times the present population of the world.

This vast number answers one of the conditions specified by the apostle: it is a number which no man can reckon. It has been estimated that 50 millions is about the utmost amount which a man could reckon in a year; so that to reckon the above number would require a period of 7,000 years. The question will remain to be considered, whether the globe, as reconstituted, may be capable of sustaining so vast a population—a question which will be investigated in the sequel.

The angel, having thus intimated the general dimensions of the city, proceeds to measure separately the height of the wall. Verse 17: 'And he measured the wall thereof 144 cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel.' These 144 cubits were twelve times the length of the reed, assuming it to have been twelve cubits in length—a circumstance strongly tending to confirm that assumption, seeing it preserves the ruling number twelve in all the measurements. The height of the wall also confirms the accuracy of the assumption which has been made in regard to the relation between the cubit and the stadium; for, according to this relation, the circuit of the wall will be exactly 144,000 times its height; thus again preserving the ruling number twelve in the various proportions. This peculiar relation between the height of the wall and its circuit appears to remove all doubt that the length of the stadium was 432 cubits.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GEMS.

THE measurement of the city being completed, the apostle proceeds with the details of his description. Verse 18: 'And the building of the wall of it was of jasper, and the city was pure gold like unto clear glass.' It has been already pointed out that by the jasper, which he describes as a crystalline gem of great value, the apostle probably means the oriental ruby; and that the light passing through the wall, while the city was yet above him, produced the appearance which he describes in the 11th verse, where he compares the lustre of the city to that of a crystallised jasper; but now that he is able to view the city distinct from the wall, he describes it as being of pure gold like clear glass. Recent scientific discoveries have thrown a curious light on this remarkable expression; for it has been found that, by chemical combination, there can be formed crystallised substances which, when viewed by transmitted light, are quite transparent and colourless, like pure glass; but, when viewed by the light reflected from their surfaces, exhibit a decided colour, and in some instances a bright metallic lustre.[1] Now, this phenomenon goes far to explain the meaning of St. John's expression. All those parts of the city that were seen by transmitted light

[1] E.g. iodide of quinine.

were transparent and colourless like clear glass, while those seen by reflected light displayed the rich yellow colour and metallic lustre of pure gold. It may be further supposed that every movement of the apostle's eye interchanged these appearances, so that those parts which at one instant resembled pure gold, in the next appeared like clear glass, thus leading him to describe the entire city as exhibiting both of those aspects.

It is of more importance, however, to investigate the spiritual meaning of this peculiar appearance which the city presented to the eye of the apostle. The pure gold, tried and refined in the fire, is an obvious emblem of that purity of the moral affections—that sincere love to God and genuine charity to men—produced by the discipline of the present life, from which the redeemed emerge like gold out of the furnace. It may also signify the high value which this purity of the moral affections possesses in the Divine regard.

The resemblance to clear glass, again, appears to denote perfect clearness of the moral and intellectual perceptions. These shall no longer be clouded by passion, nor dimmed by prejudice; but all things shall be discerned by the minds of the redeemed in their true light, and their proper colours. This resemblance may further indicate that genuine sincerity and transparency of character which results from inward purity, and which is generally so distinctive a peculiarity of the young mind. Having nothing to hide—nothing whereof to be ashamed—the redeemed shall be quite open, sincere and transparent; so that while the general quality of their moral condition will resemble pure gold, it will also be clear as glass. That transparency is the quality thus indicated, becomes more apparent from the 21st verse, where it is said that the street of the city was pure gold, like unto transparent glass.

Having thus delineated the general aspect of the city, the apostle proceeds to a more minute description of the wall; and it is somewhat remarkable that the wall should be thus dwelt upon, and described with such minuteness of detail, in preference to any other part of the city, more especially when it is considered how small a space it occupied, compared with the general mass of the pyramid; for it must have appeared like a mere thread running round the base. This circumstance indicates that there is attached to the wall a symbolical importance, pre-eminent over that of the rest of the city. The apostle has affirmed that the general mass of the wall was of crystalline jasper; but he now adds (verses 19, 20): 'And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelth amethyst.' There is in this enumeration of gems an obvious reference to those which were set in the breast-plate of Aaron. The two lists, indeed, are evidently intended to be the same. The names of the gems in the breast-plate of Aaron, as given in the Septuagint, are sardius, topaz, emerald, carbuncle, sapphire, jasper, ligure, agate, amethyst, chrysolite, beryl, onyx. On comparing these with the names given by St. John, it will be found that eight of them—the sardius, topaz, emerald, sapphire, jasper, amethyst, chrysolite, and beryl—are identical, while the remaining four are not difficult of identification. Thus the onyx St. John calls sardonyx, which is a peculiar species of onyx, its stripes being red and grey instead of black and grey. The agate he names chalcedony, both of which names are still applied to the same mineral—the chalcedony being the

purest kind of agate. The carbuncle, called in the Septuagint *anthrax*, St. John names jacinth—the former appellation, anthrax, being given to the gem because of its resemblance to glowing charcoal; the latter, because its colour is like one of the tints of the flower called jacinth or hyacinth; it is of a hyacinthine red, and is a species of garnet. The ligure of the Septuagint St. John calls the chrysoprase—the former appellation being probably taken from Liguria, the name of the country where it is found; the latter from its peculiar tint, a very yellow or golden green. There can, therefore, be no rational doubt as to the identity of the two enumerations.

The apostle had previously mentioned (verse 14), 'that the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.' It is evident, therefore, that on each of the gems forming those twelve foundations there was engraved the name of one of the apostles—a circumstance establishing a further correspondence between these precious stones and those in the breast-plate of Aaron, on which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. In the case of the New Jerusalem, the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were inscribed on the twelve gates; but on the twelve foundations of precious stones, the names inscribed were those of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

By these foundations are meant, not single stones, but the whole of the lower courses of the wall, which might be regarded as being by these twelve foundations divided into twelve equal sections, each having a gate in its centre. As the gates, however, would not extend to the whole height of the wall, the latter would be entire and continuous throughout its upper part, forming one great whole.

To complete the description of the wall, the apostle continues (v. 21), 'And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was one pearl.' The pearl is a jewel to which the ancients attached a peculiar value; and as its price immensely increases with its magnitude, a pearl of the enormous size here indicated must represent something inestimably valuable. That the pearl should have been selected for the gate is the more remarkable, because there is, in its spherical figure, no natural adaptation to form a gate. Physically speaking, indeed, it is difficult to see how a gate could be formed of one large globular pearl. It is, moreover, afterwards mentioned that these gates were never closed. It seems more probable, therefore, that the gate was a simple opening in the wall, and that the pearl was placed either immediately over or immediately in front of it. However this may be, and whatever may have been the physical appearance presented to the eye of the seer, the selection of the pearl for the gates must obviously have some spiritual signification. Save for this reason, it would have been more natural that they should have been formed of gold or fine brass.

Now the pearl is an emblem, the meaning of which it is not difficult to penetrate. There is, in its employment here, an evident allusion to the parable of the pearl of great price, to obtain possession of which the merchant sold all that he had. Under this type our Lord symbolises the knowledge of Divine truth. Of such knowledge the pearl is a peculiarly fit emblem. It is the only one of all the precious jewels that grows; it increases from year to year, layer upon layer; and the greater its magnitude, the higher its price. So it is with knowledge. It accumulates by slow degrees; and the greater its amount, the more is its value enhanced. But then it must be knowledge of the right sort, having great beauty and lustre;

otherwise its fitting emblem might be, not a pearl, but an onion.

Viewing the pearl, then, as a symbol of the knowledge of Divine truth, it becomes obvious why it is placed at the gates of the New Jerusalem. It evidently denotes that it is through the knowledge of Divine truth that entrance to the holy city is to be obtained.

There appears, however, to be a further and more hidden meaning involved in this emblem. It will be remembered that in the ancient Jerusalem the gate of the city was the place in which the king sat to dispense judgment; so that the city-gate becomes by mental association identified with the seat of judgment and instruction. These twelve gates of the New Jerusalem may, therefore, in like manner, represent seats of judgment and instruction—an idea confirmed by the circumstance that there was stationed at each gate an angel, who may be regarded as symbolising superior information and intelligence.

It will be further borne in mind that our Saviour promised to His disciples that they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Now, according to Oriental fashion, these twelve thrones, or seats of judgment, would be stationed at the gates of the city. It is probable, therefore, that in the vision it was on these thrones of judgment that the angels were seated, as temporarily supplying the place of the twelve apostles who were separately symbolised under the emblem of the twelve foundations of the wall, having their names written upon them, they being pre-eminently lively stones in this great spiritual building. This idea is further confirmed by the circumstance that the twelve gates had inscribed upon them the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The reference to those tribes, both in the promise of our Lord, and in the inscriptions over the city gates,

ought not, however, to be so literally understood as to confine the idea to Israel according to the flesh; for it is clearly taught, in the New Testament scriptures, that the true spiritual Israel are all those who are spiritually sons of God—all who submit their wills to the guidance of the Spirit of God.

Hence arises a strong probability that wherever Israel is spoken of with reference to the redeemed church, the term is to be understood in this spiritual sense; while the division into tribes may denote that, as the ancient Israel, although so divided, called by different names and distinguished by various peculiarities, yet constituted only one great family, so it is with the spiritual Israel. Although divided into separate denominations, and distinguished by various peculiarities of character, sentiment, and creed, they yet constitute only one family in Christ, being all spiritual sons of God. If then, the gates of the city represent the seats of judgment and instruction, to be occupied by the twelve apostles, the Israel whom they are there to instruct are more probably those spiritual sons of God, than the descendants of Israel according to the flesh.

It has been already shown to be unlikely that the gates themselves were actually formed each of one pearl, the more especially as it is afterwards affirmed that they were to be always open. It was pointed out that these jewels were more probably placed either above or in front of the openings in the wall, by which entrance to the city was obtained. The greater probability seems to be that they were placed in front, if these pearls were intended to represent the thrones of judgment prepared for the apostles, and to symbolise the accumulation of wisdom and knowledge concentrated there; more especially if the angels, who temporarily occupied the places of the apostles, were seated on the pearls.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEANING OF THE WALL.

We are now in a position to inquire into the symbolical meaning of the wall itself of this great city, the New Jerusalem.

Seeing the whole city is to be regarded as an emblem of the redeemed church in its integrity, the wall must be held to be a portion of that body distinguished by some peculiarity, shadowed forth by the precious gem, the crystallised jasper or ruby. The purpose of a city wall is not only to define its boundaries, but to defend it from assault, and prevent the ingress of any enemy, who might injure the inhabitants. The wall of the New Jerusalem may therefore represent those who have distinguished themselves in the defence of pure Christianity, and in promoting the knowledge of Divine truth—those who have been pre-eminent as witnesses of the truth as it is in Jesus. This view is confirmed by a passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews. After describing, in the 11th chapter, those who had in ancient times borne a distinguished testimony to the truth, and detailing all they had done and suffered for its sake, the author of that epistle, in the beginning of the 12th chapter, says, 'Seeing therefore we also are compassed about with so great a cloud (or throng) of martyrs (or witnesses).' Thus he speaks of the great body of believers as being surrounded, as it were, by a rampart of witnesses—wit-

nesses, not to their actions, but to the truth of God—having in many instances sealed their testimony with their blood, and having all submitted to great sacrifices for the truth's sake.

The city wall may accordingly be regarded as an emblem of this great cloud of witnesses, surrounding the ingathered multitude of the redeemed; and it may here be inferred that those who had thus distinguished themselves on earth, by their efforts in the cause of truth, shall be pre-eminently honoured in the future state. Of this pre-eminence we have also an assurance in the prophecies of Daniel (chapter xii. 3): 'They that be wise (or they that be instructors) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' These may be regarded as standing in the same relation to the general body of the redeemed as that in which ancient Israel stood to the rest of mankind. That favoured people were selected from among the nations as witnesses to the Divine truth, to which they were required to bear perpetual testimony. Hence it is not unnatural that this wall of witnesses should be associated with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. St. Paul calls himself a 'Hebrew of the Hebrews,' and these witnesses may be regarded as the Israel of the spiritual Israel.

The curious circumstance that, according to the relation between the cubit and the stadium before assumed, the circuit of the wall was exactly 144,000 times its height, appears to establish a connection between this emblem and that of the 144,000 of the tribes of Israel who were sealed, and who appeared surrounding the Lamb upon Mount Sion. There seems, indeed, to be no reasonable grounds for doubting that the city wall in some manner represents those 144,000: 'The redeemed from among men, the prime fruits unto God and the Lamb.'

The question here arises, then, whether the exact number of the witnesses be 144,000—thus taking the height of the wall as the standard for this portion of the redeemed; or whether we should take the model of twelve cubits as the standard in this case, as well as in that of the general body—a course which would have the effect of increasing their number 144 times, making it 20,736,000. The wall, it will be remembered, was divided into twelve sections, each having for its foundation a course of masonry composed of a different precious stone, inscribed with the name of an apostle; and having in its centre a gate inscribed with the name of one of the tribes of Israel. The length of each of these sections would be 12,000 times the height of the wall, thus corresponding to the 12,000 sealed out of each tribe of Israel, as recorded in the 7th chapter of the Apocalypse. This circumstance favours the idea that the height of the wall is, in this case, to be regarded as the unit of measurement; nor should it cause surprise to find that, as those represented by the wall were distinguished in other respects from the general body of the redeemed, they might be distinguished also in this respect of their having assigned to them a larger space in the general area of the pyramid, as denoting a more extended sphere of influence and power.

This principle appears to be shadowed forth in our Lord's parable, in which He states that to the servant whose pound had gained ten pounds, the king gave authority over ten cities; while to the servant whose pound had gained five pounds, he gave authority over five cities. Hence we may suppose the wall and the city in the vision to represent those two classes of servants, and that those symbolised by the wall have assigned to them a larger space than those represented by the city.

It is worthy of note, however, that the singular

coincidence of the number of squares in the wall, measured by its height as the standard of unity, with the number of the sealed ones, strongly confirms the general principle that the extent of the superficial area of the pyramid is really designed, in some manner, to indicate the exact number of the redeemed.

But it may be asked, seeing we have this indication that the height of the wall is the standard of unity in the one case, ought we not to apply it to the other also, and estimate the superficial area of the city by the number of times it contains the square of the height of the wall? The answer to this question must be negative; because the number thus obtained would be far too small—being only 2,592 millions, or little more than double the present population of the globe. Now, although this number might be considered as fulfilling one of the requisite conditions, inasmuch as it is one which it would be hardly possible for any man to reckon, seeing it would take about half a century to count it, yet there is another consideration which shows it to be much too limited. It has already been pointed out that there is a beautiful arrangement of Divine Providence by which the majority of the human race is secured to Christ—God having 'ordained strength out of the mouths of babes and sucklings to disappoint the enemy and the avenger.' It may therefore be fairly presumed that, of those who have hitherto lived on the earth, more than half are already numbered among the redeemed. Now in the Appendix, 'On the probable law of increase of the human race,' it is shown that the number who have already lived on the earth cannot be estimated at less than 50,000 millions, of which the larger proportion are saved; so that the number of the redeemed is already, in all likelihood, more than ten times what would be assigned to them by taking the height of the wall as the

standard of unity. Again, as there is no mean standard between the height of the wall and the length of the angel's reed, we are thus almost forced to adopt the latter as the unit of measurement applicable to the area of the city.

According to this view, that portion of the redeemed who are symbolised by the wall must be regarded as not being embraced in the general measurement of the city itself, but as forming a distinct body in addition to those represented by the city. Thus the 144,000 included in the wall will fall to be added to whatever number the general dimensions of the city may be held to represent.

This great body of 144,000 appears to be thus distinguished and separated from the general mass of the saved, to constitute a host of instructors to the redeemed church. When it is considered to what an extent that church will consist of young children and unlearned persons, it will be perceived that such a body of instructors will be requisite to leaven the mass with a knowledge of the Divine truth.

Having thus ascertained the probable meaning of the symbol of the wall itself—namely, that it represents the great body of those who have most prominently distinguished themselves as witnesses for the truth in the present life, and who are therefore to have the honour of instructing the general body of the redeemed in the future world—it remains to be considered what is shadowed forth by the precious stones, of which the wall and its twelve foundations were composed.

It will be remembered that, among the materials which a man may build upon the one foundation, Jesus Christ, St. Paul specifies 'Gold, silver, precious stones' (1 Cor. iii. 11, 12). Under these symbols the apostle probably denotes various excellencies of Christian character—gold and silver representing those qualities which are refined

and purified in the furnace of affliction; the precious stones those qualities which withstand, uninjured, the fiery trial. This circumstance raises the probability that, by the precious stones forming the foundations, are to be understood similar excellencies in the characters of those represented by the wall.

From the mention of there being inscribed on each foundation the name of an apostle, it might, at first sight, appear that each stone symbolises some peculiarity by which the apostle whose name it bore was distinguished from the rest. But had this been the meaning, the probability is that, where so many minute particulars are given, the name of the apostle assigned to each foundation would have been specified, so that the resemblance might be recognised. The indefinite form of the description, however, rather favours the idea that these gems represent certain qualities, or peculiarities, which were exhibited in an especial manner by the twelve apostles as a body, and more or less by all those symbolised by the wall, in preference to the notion that each shadows forth some peculiarity in the character of that apostle whose name it might bear. The inscribing the name of an apostle on each foundation, moreover, may symbolise the authority which each apostle is to exercise over a large section of the general body of instructors, represented by the wall.

The number 12 of those gems may be regarded as merely symbolising the completeness of the category of virtues which they represent. Nevertheless, the specification of the names of the jewels seems to point to the conclusion that each separate stone may have in some manner typified some special excellence. This idea is strengthened by the circumstance that a certain emblematical idea was anciently attached to several of the precious gems. For example, the amethyst being the colour

of a ripe grape was by the ancients frequently worn as an amulet to keep in mind a vow of abstinence from wine—a practice from which the jewel derives its name. It might, therefore, be regarded as a fit representative of temperance. Nor would it be difficult to imagine a similar separate signification for each of the other stones; but as these meanings would be after all only conjectural, it seems better to rest contented with regarding the whole of them together as symbolising the perfection of Christian virtues.

According to this view, these twelve gems would, in their signification, correspond to the elders seated around the Divine throne in the former vision. These were most probably types of those Christian graces and virtues which must sit enthroned in the human mind in conjunction with the Divine King himself. The elders, however, present the number of perfection doubled, so as to convey the idea of the completeness of every passive as well as of every active virtue—the ability to suffer as well as to do all things for Christ's sake. The gems of the New Jerusalem, on the other hand, represent only the active virtues; because, in the life of everlasting happiness, there will be for the passive virtues no room whatever. The number is accordingly reduced to twelve.

There is, however, another, and perhaps more important meaning, to be attached to these gems, if we regard them, not individually, but as a collective body. In the instructions given to Moses for making the breast-plate of Aaron, it is called 'the breast-plate of judgment.' After ordering to be placed in it the twelve precious stones, the Divine directions proceed thus (Exodus xxviii. 30): 'And thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord; and Aaron shall

judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart, ue Lord continually.'

this breast-plate of judgment, with the Urim and im, was the recognised medium for consulting the oracle. The meaning of the word Urim is 'fires s,' while Thummim means 'perfections;' and both re obviously to be taken in a metaphysical sense. venty, accordingly, in rendering this passage, call astplate 'the oracle of judgment,' and say 'Thou establish in the oracle of judgment significations ruths.' The meaning of the directions given to s, then, with respect to the breast-plate, appears to be he was to establish it as the medium of obtaining lectual light, and ascertaining perfect truth—more cially, for ascertaining the Divine decision and judg- t on difficult points. Hence we find that the Ephod the breast-plate, in which were established the Urim Thummim—the lights and the truths—was always orted to, when it was wished to obtain the Divine cision on any question of difficulty. The exact manner which this was done, and in which the responses were ven, is unknown; but it may be conjectured that the welve stones composed a sort of telegraph, by which the esponse was conveyed. Those acquainted with telegraphy ay easily form to themselves a conception of the manner n which such responses might be given, by causing certain of the gems to glow or emit sparks—an idea confirmed by the term 'lights' employed in the original instructions. But whatever might have been the mode in which the responses were indicated, there seems little reason to doubt that the gems constituted the recognised medium through which the Divine responses were conveyed. Hence these jewels, as a collective body, would become so associated with the Divine oracles as to be regarded as their most appropriate emblem.

Thus the gems, forming the foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem, may symbolise the fact that the testimony to the Divine truth, given by the great body of the witnesses represented by the wall, was founded on the oracles of God—on the communications which He 'at sundry times and in divers manners' has made to mankind. The circumstance that the gems were inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb appears to denote that the latter were, under the Christian dispensation, made the depositories of the Divine oracles—'the lights and the truths'—and entrusted with the duty of communicating them to mankind. Hence it is that St. Paul speaks of the great spiritual house as being 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,' who were 'the lively oracles of God.'

CHAPTER X.

THE EMBLEM OF THE STREET, AND OTHER PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE CITY.

St. John winds up his description of the general aspect of the city by saying (v. 21), 'And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.' The mention here of 'the street of the city,' in the singular number, confirms the idea previously suggested, that this city consisted of one continuous street, winding round the four sides of the pyramid by a gentle ascent from its base to its apex. It also strengthens the conclusion that the true figure of the city was a pyramid, and not a cube—a form with which the idea of a street would be incongruous.

The word 'street' is here probably applied to the broad path of the city, rather than to the buildings. These had been already described as of pure gold, like unto clear glass; but this additional information appears to convey the idea that the very pavement of the city was of the same beautiful and precious material. There is in this part of the emblem a shade of metaphysical meaning, somewhat distinct from that conveyed by the statement respecting the city itself. The latter symbolises the character of the persons composing the redeemed church, the purity of their moral affections, and the clearness of their intellectual perceptions. But the street of pure gold, as it were transparent glass, appears

to denote the purity and perfection of their ways. The citizens of the holy city tread the golden paths of holiness and virtue, and their course is transparent as glass; for they follow after nothing of which they need be ashamed.

The apostle, having thus described the general appearance of the city, proceeds to mention some further peculiarities by which it was distinguished (v. 22): 'And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb *are* the temple of it.' This passage is decidedly mistranslated. It ought to stand thus: 'And a temple I saw not in her; for the Lord God Almighty *is* her temple, even the Lamb.' According to the mistranslation of our version, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are spoken of as if they were a pair, and as together constituting the temple of the city; whereas in the Greek, the Lord God Almighty is spoken of as a unity, with whom the Lamb is identified, as being the temple of the city. In describing the first appearance of the city, the apostle makes no mention of the Lamb. He merely says, 'the tabernacle of God is with men'; but in the above verse he indicates the precise manner of God's presence with mankind; namely, that it is to be through the medium of the Lamb, which means the human person of Christ, the true temple which the Jews destroyed, and which He rebuilt in three days. The conclusion at which we have already arrived is thus confirmed—namely, that in the future state God is to dwell among men in the person of Christ, He being the sole medium through which mankind can see Him who is essentially invisible, and whose presence is illimitable.

The next verse contains an expansion of the same idea. As it is, like the foregoing, not very correctly rendered by our translators, it may be well to translate it literally from the original. 'And the city has no need of the

sun, neither of the moon to shine upon her; for the glory of God enlighteneth her, even her luminary the Lamb.' Thus we see that in this passage also the Lamb is identified with the Deity, more especially with His glory, and is not mentioned as a distinct and separate source of illumination, as would appear from the manner in which the verse is rendered in the authorised version. The true meaning is, that the Lamb is the luminary of the city: and He illuminates it with the glory of God, of which He is the embodiment and impersonation.

Now the light which the Lamb thus diffuses around Him is not physical, but moral and intellectual; whence it is evident that the whole passage is to be understood spiritually. The sun and moon are to be taken in that same metaphorical sense in which they have been previously used in the prophecy, as denoting supreme civil and ecclesiastical authority. Of any such vested in the person of any of their number, the great body of the redeemed stand in no need; for the Lamb is both their king and high priest. He is an impersonation of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, the sun and centre of all wisdom and power.

Even were we to understand the sun and moon in the physical sense, however, the passage before us would not warrant the conclusion that there is to be neither sun nor moon in the new system of the world. It merely means that the welfare and happiness of the redeemed shall not, to any extent, depend on the shining or not shining of those luminaries; for it is secured to them by the presence of the Lamb, who illuminates their mind with the Divine glory. That the physical sun and moon are not to be absent from the new system, we shall find a distinct intimation in the sequel. This idea, that the sun and moon are to subsist as physical luminaries in the

renovated world, is opposed to the hypothesis, now so much in favour with some philosophers, that the sun is a cooling body, which must eventually become a cold, dark, inert mass. That hypothesis, however, is founded solely on our ignorance of the sources of the solar energy, and of the mode of its renewal. It has no historical basis; for so far as human history extends there has been no diminution in the average amount of energy which the earth derives from the sun. (On this point see the Author's recent work, entitled 'The Beginning, its When and its How,' pp. 123, 549.)

The apostle next informs us that 'the nations of the saved shall walk in her light.' Here the great body of the redeemed are called 'the nations of the saved,' thus indicating that the salvation secured by Christ is not limited to any one nation or people, but embraces all, of whatever nation or kindred, who, by submitting their wills to the guidance of the Spirit of God, become the spiritual sons of God. The light of the city being the moral and intellectual light proceeding from the Lamb—the impersonation of the glory of God—the statement that the nations of the saved shall walk in that light must obviously mean that they shall, in all their ways, be guided by those revelations of the Divine will which shall be made to them by the Lamb, present among them, directing all their counsels and instructing them in every right course.

It is added, 'And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into her.' This averment involves the idea of a transference of the glory and honour of kings to the great body of the redeemed, who are declared to be made 'kings and priests unto God.' All that is glorious and honourable in the royal authority is to be transferred to the community symbolised by this city; that is to say, order and good government, which are the true glory and

honour of kings, shall so prevail among the redeemed as to obviate the necessity for there being either kings or governors to maintain them. This statement, following so immediately after the declaration at the beginning of the previous verse, strengthens the idea that the sun and moon are there used as metaphors for the supreme civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

In the next verse (the 25th) the apostle states: 'And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there.' It is not to be imagined that the word 'night' is here used in the physical sense. The very mention of a day excludes this supposition; for one day could not be distinguished from another, except by the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies, and the alternations of light and darkness which these produce. Moreover, the absence of any physical night would amount to the exclusion of the redeemed from the contemplation of those starry heavens which declare the glory of God, and that firmament which showeth His handiwork—a deprivation not to be thought of. On the contrary, it is much more probable that the redeemed shall be indulged with far greater facilities than mankind now enjoy, for prosecuting the study of the heavenly bodies, and that they shall receive direct information respecting their arrangement and constitution from the great Architect Himself, through the medium of His impersonation—Christ. There is one sense, indeed, in which it might be said that there shall be no physical night in the church of the redeemed; namely, that it shall be so widely and uniformly diffused over the whole globe, that the sun shall never set upon it; but it is much more probable that the word 'night' is here used in a purely metaphysical sense.

Seeing the gates of the city mean seats of judgment and instruction, their being constantly open indicates the continuity of the flow of instruction proceeding from

those judicial thrones. It is uninterrupted by any night of ignorance, of indolence, or indifference, to arrest the perpetual progress of the redeemed in wisdom and knowledge.

In the future state, moreover, men shall not be liable to that species of physical exhaustion which requires for its removal the mimic death of sleep. Their energies shall be continually awake, so that, during the physical night, they shall be occupied in studying and admiring those wonders which night alone discloses to their view. In another sense, too, there shall be no recurrence of such nights as we have on earth; for these are often times of danger—the darkness being taken advantage of by the evil-disposed to perpetrate robbery and violence. This idea seems particularly involved in the fact of the gates of the city being left constantly open. It is the absence of spiritual, rather than of physical insecurity, however, that is specially meant. In the present life there recur at intervals periods of moral darkness and ignorance, of which the spiritual adversaries of mankind take advantage, to assail the citadel of the truth, as it is in Jesus; and it is then the duty of all her defenders to close the gates and man the walls. But in the future state there shall be no return of such nights of ignorance and periods of insecurity. The progress of the human race shall be continuous and uninterrupted. The gates of knowledge shall never for a moment be closed. Last and best of all, there shall be no return of that 'night, in which no man can work'—the night of death. The redeemed shall be for ever secure against the assaults of that dread enemy, and shall pursue their course of intellectual progress, and delight themselves in spiritual intercourse with Christ and with each other, without fear that they shall ever be arrested in their career, or interrupted in their enjoyments, by the rude hand of the destroyer.

There being thus several modes of explaining the expression before us, each sufficient in itself, it would be childish to entertain the supposition that in the future state there is to be an absence of physical night—an idea, moreover, quite excluded by certain expressions occurring in the sequel.

The next verse runs thus: 'And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.' It would almost appear as if, in the course of transcription, verse 25 had changed places with the last clause of verse 24, and that verse 26 had been originally connected with the statement contained in the last clause of verse 24, reading the whole passage thus: 'And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it, and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.' It is possible, however, that the active form of the verb, occurring in verse 26, may be used instead of the passive, and that the expression may be equivalent to our form, 'there shall be brought into her the glory and honour of the nations.' But it is of more importance to attend to the meaning of this last phrase, 'the glory and honour of the nations.' It certainly does not signify their wealth, their luxury, their grandeur; for these are, in the sight of God, not the true honour and glory of any nation. It is the wise, the just, the brave, the good, the kind, who, of whatever nation they may be, constitute its true glory and honour. These, then, are they whom all the nations of the earth shall send into this city. We have here again an indication of the universality of the redemption. It is not one nation whose glory and honour is to be brought into the New Jerusalem, but the nations generally, in the widest sense of the term; all the wise and the good shall be

found there, to whatever nation or family they may have belonged in the present life.

It is remarkable that, in this instance, as in the previous part of the chapter, the character of those who are to enter the holy city is given in the most general terms, while that of those who are to be denied admission is much more specifically delineated, as we find it in v. 27: 'And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.' This specification may be left to make its own impression. The last clause, however, would have been better translated thus, 'none but those described in the Lamb's book of life;' that is, none but those possessing the character described in the Divine word as being necessary to the attainment of everlasting life.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

THE emblems examined in the foregoing chapters may have served to convey some general ideas respecting the characters of the persons composing the redeemed church in the future state; but those now about to be considered appear designed to shadow forth the nature of the enjoyments, the manner of life, and the state of society, which are to prevail in the new and eternal condition of the saved.

The apostle proceeds with his description as follows (chap. xxii. v. 1): 'And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.' The person here mentioned as showing this river to St. John is obviously the angel introduced in the preceding chapter, who came to show him the holy city itself, and who measured its dimensions. By his showing the apostle this river we are to understand his pointing it out to him, and calling to it his particular attention.

The expression 'A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal,' is very peculiar. It renders it evident that, while this river is an emblem, it nevertheless appeared to the eye of the apostle to be simply a river of very pure water, clear as crystal. The metaphor involves an obvious allusion to the words spoken by our Lord to the woman at the well of Samaria, and also to His declaration

made to the apostle himself, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, verse 6: 'I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.'

It will be remembered that our Lord, in like manner, speaks of Himself as the bread of life, of which, if a man eat, he shall never hunger. It was doubtless with reference to this metaphor that He taught His disciples to pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread;' and a request for a daily supply of needful spiritual nourishment is the primary and more exalted sense of that petition. Nevertheless it equally admits of no doubt that it has a secondary and more obvious sense, as applicable to the nourishment needful to the body. This circumstance renders it not improbable that the metaphor of the river of water of life has a similar double sense; that it means not only a continuous and inexhaustible flow of moral and intellectual enjoyment and refreshment, prepared for the minds of the redeemed, but also a like perpetual and exhaustless supply of refreshment for their organic frames. If we admit the resurrection of the body at all, we must admit that the future body is to be an organised structure subject to organic laws, yet possessing within itself a principle of perpetual self-renovation, which shall arrest the smallest inroad of disease or decay.

We have fortunately, in the risen body of Christ, a perfect example of the nature of the new body to be given at the general resurrection to the redeemed; for we are told that 'our body shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body.' Now while Christ appears to have exercised over His risen body a power of dissipation and resumption, it is beyond doubt that while it subsisted it was material and organic, capable of being seen, felt, and handled, as also of taking food. We are hence bound to conclude that the new bodies of the redeemed are to be in like manner material and organic, possessing also the

same capabilities. Now every such organism requires for its maintenance a continuous supply of pure water; and we have accordingly in the emblem before us an indication that such an inexhaustible supply will be provided. Nevertheless the primary idea is doubtless that of a never-failing supply of moral and intellectual refreshment for the mind. The water being clear as crystal denotes the perfect purity of these enjoyments. They are free from all taint of pollution or sin. Regarded also as symbolising the provision made for the bodily refreshment of the redeemed, the clearness of the water indicates its healthful character. It is to be such as shall effectually prevent the approach of malady or decline.

This river was seen to flow 'from the throne of God, even the Lamb,' for so the phrase ought to be rendered. As there is but one throne, so is there but one occupant, and not two, as our translation might indicate. That one occupant is God, present in the person of the Lamb—Christ. There is something very striking in this association of titles given to Him that sat on the throne; for it brings before the mind at once the humiliation and the exaltation of our Saviour. 'He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross'—a fact symbolised by the emblem of the Lamb, which appeared to have been slain in sacrifice. But in the future world, He, as God, shall reign over the entire body of those who shall by His sacrifice be saved.

The flowing of the water from the throne renders it evident that the latter occupied an elevated position, and further strengthens the conclusion previously drawn, that the form of the holy city was a pyramid and not a cube. With the idea of a cube this river is quite irreconcilable; whereas, by adopting the pyramid, we can readily form a precise notion of the appearance here described. The throne occupied the apex of the pyramid, and thence the

[illegible] of the city on a [illegible]

[illegible] a correct idea of the [illegible] of the apostle, [illegible] of the meta- [illegible] flowing from the [illegible] That meaning obviously [illegible] enjoyments of the [illegible] of Christ among [illegible] as their Divine [illegible] refreshment [illegible] it all flows [illegible] they would all [illegible] among which [illegible] be an unquench- [illegible] that sensation, [illegible] and Lazarus.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TREE OF LIFE.

THAT the conclusion drawn in the foregoing chapter with respect to the river flowing down the street of the city, from the apex of the pyramid, is correct, becomes more apparent from the statement contained in the next verse, which however is not happily rendered by our translators. A careful inspection of the original will show that in this second verse the apostle continues to describe what was shown to him by the angel, in addition to the river mentioned in the preceding verse; so that the verb 'showed' governs the noun 'tree' as well as the the noun 'river.' Hence, instead of the words 'was there,' in italics, supplied in our version, we ought, in order to a thorough understanding of the passage, to repeat at the beginning of this verse the words 'and he showed me,' reading it thus: 'And he showed me in the midst of the street, and on either side of the river, a tree of life, forming twelve fruits, each yielding its fruit monthly (or for one month); also the leaves of the tree for healing the nations.' Some critics have proposed to read the first clause otherwise, thus: 'In the midst of the street and of the river, hither and thither a tree of life,' understanding that the tree was in the middle both of the street and of the river, the latter flowing on either side of it. Now the middle of a river [illegible] a natural place for the growth of a tree, we m[illegible] to this view, suppose the river to flow on [illegible] the street. But had this

been the appearance presented to the mental eye of the apostle, he would have described it, not as one river, but two; for two there must have been had the water flowed on either side of the street. Again, this notion places the tree of life in a position not easy of access; because to reach it one must cross the river. There need be no hesitation, therefore, in rejecting this interpretation, and adhering to that given in the authorised version—namely that the tree grew on either side of the river, not that the river flowed on either side of the tree.

The whole difficulty arises from supposing that there was only one tree of life; but a little reflection will show that the term 'tree of life' is here used generically, not as the name of an individual tree. The meaning is, that on either side of the river which flowed in the midst of the street, there grew trees of the kind called 'tree of life,' forming a double row along the whole course of the street. That the term 'tree of life' is used generically becomes more obvious from the sequel, where it is said that it formed twelve fruits; that is, there were twelve species of this tree, distinguished from each other by the difference of the fruits which they respectively produced. This is rendered further evident from the next clause, which is very imperfectly translated in our version, but which in the Greek stands thus, 'each yielding its fruit monthly (or for one month)'—thus clearly showing that there were twelve species of the tree, each yielding its peculiar fruit monthly, or for one month, and not that the twelve varieties of fruit all grew on one and the same individual tree. It will be observed that in the above translation there is given an alternative, either 'monthly,' or 'for one month,' because there is an uncertainty in the reading. Griesbach considers the word 'one' as of doubtful authority, although he admits it into his text. Lachmann and Alford omit, while Bloomfield inserts it.

Its rejection would not, however, remove all doubt as to the meaning; for it might then be either 'yielding its fruit each month, or each yielding its fruit monthly.' The retention of the 'one' seems to fix the meaning of the 'each' as applying to the tree, and not to the month, otherwise there would be a tautology; but it still leaves the meaning doubtful, whether we ought to understand that a crop of each of the twelve fruits was produced every month, or that the twelve fruits were produced in successive months, each crop subsisting for only one month at a time; the former interpretation conveys the most enlarged idea of abundance, but the language admits of being understood either way.

This mention of the *month* renders it evident that the physical constitution of the globe, as respects its external relations to the other orbs in the universe, is to be the same in the future as it is in the present state of the world. In the time of the apostle the changes of the moon were the only recognised means of measuring the months; consequently his mention of them indicates the subsistence of the moon, and also of the sun by whose light she shines, and the continuance of those luminaries to divide the day from the night, and to be for signs and for seasons and for days and years for ever and ever. We are thus confirmed in our conclusion that the phrases in the preceding chapter of the Apocalypse, bearing on this point, do not involve the idea that the physical sun and moon are not to shine in the future world, and that there is to be no physical night.

Having thus formed to ourselves a clear conception of the appearance subjectively presented to the apostle's eye, by this row on either side of the river, composed of the twelve species of the tree of life, let us endeavour to penetrate the meaning of the emblem. As in the case of the river, there is here most probably involved a twofold

signification. There is shadowed forth the ample provision made both for the bodily sustenance and the mental progress of the redeemed. Let us first consider the emblem in the former, and then in the latter point of view.

That the future bodies of the redeemed shall require physical nourishment will not be doubted, when it is considered how large a proportion of the saved shall consist of infants and young children. It would be an inconsistent supposition to imagine that those who die in infancy and childhood shall rise with full-grown bodies; for not only would all trace of identity be thus destroyed, but there would be the incongruity of a full-grown body encasing an infant mind. Every mind, whether young or old, on awaking from the slumber of death into the everlasting activity of the eternal state, shall be in the same condition as that in which it fell asleep, at the moment of its separation from the body. In the disembodied state, the mind can receive no new ideas; for the organisation, through which all its ideas are imbibed, is destroyed. Hence, when an infant or child awakes at the resurrection, his mind will be in the same immature state as when he fell asleep; consequently the supposition, that such an immature mind is to receive a mature body, would involve a violation of all those rules of fitness and propriety which characterise the whole of the Divine proceedings.

If, then, all who die in infancy and childhood shall begin their future and everlasting life as infants and children, it is plain that their bodies will require nourishment for their growth. Even the mature body, however, will have need of aliment; for there is no organic function performed—not even the function of thought—which does not involve an expenditure of organised material requiring to be replaced by fresh substance,

which has to be taken into the system, and to become assimilated, so as to repair the waste. The function of respiration, without which organic life cannot be maintained, is attended with a greater expenditure of material than any other; and the loss, occasioned by that function alone, would render needful a continual supply of nourishment for its repair.

There is this difference, however, to be expected in the future organisation, as compared with the present. According to our present constitution, and owing to a deficiency in the nutritive qualities of our food, a large proportion of material is received into our bodies which our digestive organs cannot assimilate—cannot convert into the components of our organism. But it may be expected that in the future state our food shall be so nutritious that it can be wholly assimilated; consequently that a smaller quantity of it will suffice; while our appetites shall be under such complete control that we will never take more food than we absolutely need. In this manner the whole material received into the system will enter into the composition of our organic frame.

That in the idea of our future body requiring food, there is nothing either undignified or inconsistent with the nature of our future organism, is evidenced by the circumstance that our Saviour Himself, after His resurrection, partook of food in the presence of His disciples, so as to convince them that His risen body was a real physical organic structure, and not a mere phantom. Seeing, then, we are assured, that our future bodies are to be like His risen body, we have, in the recorded fact of our Saviour's having taken food after His resurrection, a strong indication that, in the future life, food will be required for the maintenance of the organic frame.

In the tree of life producing twelve species of fruit, and each yielding its fruit monthly, we have typified both the

variety and the abundance of the provision made for the bodily wants of the redeemed. The mere circumstance of the food growing on trees is very significant. It indicates a return to the state that subsisted before the transgression of man, when his food was furnished to him by the produce of trees, without the necessity, on his part, of either care or toil. Twelve varieties of food, all agreeable to the taste, are quite sufficient to gratify the palate, and to prevent the inroads of satiety; while the fresh crops every month indicate a return to that fertility of which the earth was deprived, in consequence of man's rebellion against his Creator.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HABITABLE CAPACITY OF THE NEW EARTH.

THE foregoing discussions lead to a consideration of the capability of the new earth to sustain so vast a population as that indicated by the dimensions of the symbolical city.

The first question which presents itself is that of space. Would there be room on the surface of the globe for the comfortable residence of so immense a multitude? The circumstance, that the company of the redeemed is symbolised under the emblem of a great city, appears to denote the high civilisation which is to characterise the future and everlasting state of human society. It may hence be fairly inferred that the generality of mankind shall not be scattered in isolated families over the surface of the globe, but that they shall dwell in great and well-ordered societies, living in cities of a large but not immoderate size—only of such dimensions as shall most conduce to the welfare of the inhabitants, enabling them to partake of the enjoyments both of urban and rural life.

We may even take the superficial area of the symbolical city as an indication of the extent of surface that will be occupied by the actual dwellings of the redeemed. To each individual there is appropriated one square model or 144 square cubits, equivalent to 36 square yards, giving a rate of about 86,044 per square mile. There being in

the city 273,248 millions of square models, this is equivalent to 4,337,852 square miles for the total area occupied as habitations. It is not necessary, however, to suppose that the redeemed are to be collected into one great city. It appears more probable that they shall be distributed into numerous cities of moderate size, but so linked together by easy means of intercourse, and by a community of sentiment and feeling, that they may all be regarded as fellow-citizens of one great city.

The present habitable area of the dry land is about 51 millions of square miles; and supposing the future habitable area of the globe to be of no greater extent, there might be as much as 20 millions of square miles assigned for the habitations of men, with the needful spaces around them, and yet leave ample room for other purposes. This would reduce the density of the population to 21,500 per square mile, which for urban population is not excessive.

Nor is it improbable that, in the course of the alteration which the globe appears destined to undergo by the action of fire, its habitable surface may be very much enlarged, at the expense of its specific gravity, by its being converted into a hollow spheroid of larger external dimensions than it has now. Such an alteration would not affect its relations to the other members of the planetary system, and might act beneficially, by causing the earth to intercept a larger amount of solar energy, which would become available for enabling our globe to maintain a greater amount of continually subsisting organic life.

Then, as respects the question of food, there are various circumstances to be taken into account in forming an estimate. First, there is the perfect assimilation of the aliment, which will render unnecessary so considerable a quantity for each individual as that now consumed; secondly, there is the increased fertility of the soil, attending

the removal of the curse of barrenness; and thirdly, there is the circumstance of the food's growing on trees without the aid of culture. This last perhaps affects the question more than either of the other two. If the phrase, employed in the original to express the fruitfulness of the trees, is to be understood as meaning that each species yielded a fresh crop regularly every month, this statement would indicate a twelvefold increase in the fertility of the soil. But, according to this view, it is to such an increase in the production of *tree-borne* fruit that we are to look, and not to the general capacity of the soil alone.

Now, in the case of the banana, we have an instance of the food-producing power of trees, sufficient to afford an indication of what may be expected from similar sources in the new earth. It has been estimated by Humboldt, that a square mile of ground planted with bananas is capable of yielding yearly 50,000 tons of nutritious food. The quantity of aliment capable of perfect assimilation, required for each person, might be fairly estimated on an average at a quarter of a ton yearly—being over a pound and a half a day; so that a ton would suffice for four individuals. But to avoid fixing too low a limit, suppose half a ton annually to be produced for each person; then 50,000 tons would sustain 100,000 individuals—being at the rate of 10 square miles of plantation per million. Hence, supposing the fruit-bearing trees of the new earth to be only equal in food-producing power to the banana, the space required for affording sustenance to a population of 374,000 millions would be only 3,740,000 square miles—a space quite trifling compared with the superficial area of the dry land.

This is the estimate which may be formed, if we understand the description given in the original to mean that the trees yielded their fruits in successive months; but if we understand that each tree yielded a fresh crop every

month, concluding thence that the productive powers of the soil are to be increased twelvefold, then a space of little more than 300,000 square miles would suffice. Thus it appears that, for the dwellings and sustenance of the vast multitude of the redeemed, as estimated from the dimensions of the symbolical city, less than half of the present superficial area of the dry land would be quite adequate, leaving the remaining half free for other purposes.

There is something very significant too in the tree's growing beside the Water of Life. It brings to mind the beautiful simile—'He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.' (Psalm i. 3.) In a physical sense, this circumstance appears to indicate that the trees which are to supply bodily nourishment to the redeemed shall, by Divine Providence, be so cherished and cared for that their fruits shall never fail. They shall continually yield such abundant supplies that the redeemed shall never have, on the subject of their sustenance, one anxious thought: 'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.' This security will, to the great mass of mankind, who have during all their lives on earth been maintaining a constant struggle to obtain their daily bread, be of itself no small happiness.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE METAPHYSICAL MEANING OF THE FRUITS OF THE TREE OF LIFE.

WHILE it is thus probable that the emblem of the Tree of Life has a subordinate physical meaning, as shadowing forth the provision made for the bodily wants of the redeemed, it appears more certain that it has a primary metaphysical signification, and that it symbolizes the provision made for the mental nourishment of the nations of them that are saved.

The food of the mind is ideas, without which it is a mere blank; consequently by the fruits of the Tree of Life, taken in a metaphysical sense, we are to understand ideas. As by far the larger proportion of the redeemed will consist of infants and young children, and of adults who have enjoyed but small opportunities of intellectual improvement in the present life, the great mass of the human family, on commencing their career in the future life, will obviously have but a very slender store of ideas. Even those, who have acquired the highest attainments in this life, will find their accumulated stores to be as a drop to the ocean, compared with the inexhaustible treasures of knowledge from which they are to draw a continuous and never-ending supply in the life to come.

Each individual will begin the future life in the same state of mental development as that in which he stood at the moment of death; for the mind can receive

no addition to its store of ideas, in the absence of that material organization through which all its knowledge is imbided. There will therefore be a very unequal distribution of intellectual wealth at the commencement of the future life, so that there will be an ample field for the exercise of instructive talent on the part of those who, in the present life, have laid up for themselves heavenly treasures of knowledge and wisdom, which may be available to them in the future state, as enabling them to begin their career of further development from a more advanced starting-point.

The circumstance that, in the emblem, the ideas to be supplied to the minds of the redeemed are symbolized by fruits growing on trees, and yielded in monthly crops, indicates that, as in the present, so in the future life, these ideas are to be introduced into the mind successively and by slow degrees. Any other view, indeed, would be incongruous; for a created mind, by having thrown into it too great a mass of ideas at one time, would be completely overwhelmed. They must be introduced gradually, so that the finite mind may easily grasp them and store them in its memory.

The twelve sorts of fruit, which appeared on the Tree of Life, seem to shadow forth a twelvefold classification of ideas. It would not be difficult to form such a classification, embracing every species of knowledge in a category of twelve departments. But it is enough in this place to consider the number twelve as a type of perfection, and to regard it as intimating that every possible variety of good and useful knowledge is to be supplied in abundance to the redeemed, so as to ensure their continuous yet endless progress in moral and intellectual development.

We are not to suppose that the minds of the redeemed are to be quite perfect, on commencing their new and everlasting life. The great difference between the

future and the present condition of the mind shall consist in the state of the will. At present the will is more or less averse from God and goodness; but in the future state this condition of the will shall, in the case of the redeemed, be reversed. Their wills shall be entirely submissive to the will of God. Their whole desire shall be to render obedience to Him, and to be guided by Him in all they think, or say, or do. To this extent, therefore, they shall be morally perfect. They shall be perfect in holiness. But moral perfection, in its widest sense, consists in having large and comprehensive views of duty, and such must arise from a vast accumulation of spiritual ideas in the mind. Consequently, although the will of the redeemed shall be at once in complete harmony with that of God, yet their minds shall be continually imbibing higher and more enlarged views of moral duty, and so be perpetually advancing towards a higher amount of spiritual development.

Of mere intellectual improvement it is almost needless to speak, seeing it is obvious that the minds of the redeemed must increase in wisdom and knowledge by slow degrees and in various proportions; for there shall doubtless be diversities of mental power and of intellectual tastes similar to those which prevail in the present life.

Thus the supplies of ideas to be furnished to the redeemed shall embrace all the moral, all the physical, and all the abstract sciences. Their moral philosophy may probably include not only a knowledge of the human mind, its powers, its affections, its development, and its history, as exhibited on the stage of this world during the temporal system, but also a knowledge of all other created minds in the universe, their powers, their affections, their development, and their history.

In like manner, their physical sciences may probably embrace not only an intimate knowledge of the constitution of this globe, of all its substances, of all its organic beings, and of all their varied relations, but a similar knowledge of the constitution and contents of all the other orbs of the universe. Thus the store of information to be imparted to the redeemed will be utterly inexhaustible, and they shall never have to apprehend the arrival of a period in the eternal future when there shall remain no new ideas to be supplied.

Here a question will, perhaps, present itself to the inquiring mind. May not the redeemed, or a portion of them, be in the future state permitted to visit in succession the other orbs in the universe, so as to acquaint themselves with their constitution and contents? Possibly they may. Nevertheless, it would be an error to suppose such an actual translation in space to be indispensable to their acquiring a thorough knowledge of the other heavenly orbs; for they might receive such knowledge from their Divine King—and that either in words, or, more strikingly, by means of subjective phenomena. No one, who has not had experience of these latter, can form a conception of the vividness of the impressions which the human mind may thus receive. On the other hand, no one who has enjoyed this experience can have the least difficulty in understanding how any amount or kind of knowledge whatever may, by means of subjective phenomena, be conveyed to the mind. Indeed, the whole of the Apocalyptic visions are examples of this mode of communicating information.

Regarding the fruits of the Tree of Life as symbolizing ideas, what are we to understand by their being produced monthly? In speaking of the festivals of the new moon and the sabbath, St. Paul calls them 'a shadow of things to come.' (Col. ii. 16, 17.) He thus indicates that, in the

future life, there are to be periods corresponding to the sabbath and the new moon, which are to be distinguished by certain peculiarities. Now while the redeemed will doubtless daily engage in adoration and praise of their present God, this hint of St. Paul's seems to point to a weekly festival, which shall be dedicated to peculiar religious observances. From the analogy of the original institution of the sabbath, it appears not improbable that, in the future state, every seventh day shall be devoted by the redeemed to a revision of all they have done, and of all the knowledge they have acquired, during the previous week, so as to impress it more thoroughly on their minds, and enable them to arrange their newly-acquired ideas in systematic order. On these occasions, they may be expected to unite in rendering a more solemn tribute of thanksgiving and praise to Him from whom all their ideas and all their enjoyments flow.

Besides these weekly sabbaths, however, the circumstance of the Tree of Life's yielding fresh fruits monthly appears to point to that of which the festival of the new moon in the temporal system was a shadow. It seems to indicate that there is to be every month a fresh supply of new ideas communicated directly from the Fountain-head. Granting that in the future state, as in the present, there shall be among the redeemed great differences of mental power and development, it appears probable that the more highly endowed shall be employed in imparting instruction to those whose minds are less mature. But as all new ideas must emanate from the Fountain-head, it seems likely that, to the more richly gifted, the Divine King will periodically communicate fresh supplies, to be by them transmitted throughout the whole gradation of intellect. It is not to be expected that Christ shall directly impart to the less developed minds those ideas, which they may derive from their more advanced

fellows. For such communication of ideas, from the more highly gifted to those less endowed, will form an agreeable bond of union and sympathy, binding together all the various grades of mind. Absolutely new ideas, therefore, will probably be imparted by Christ to those minds only which are prepared to receive them, and that, in all likelihood, as now, by inward impression; while such ideas as are already possessed by some individuals He will leave to be diffused from them, as subordinate centres, throughout the general mass.

The monthly crop of fruits, then, on the Tree of Life, appears to indicate that, at the festival of each new moon, Christ is to impart to the minds best prepared for their reception a fresh supply of new ideas, to be by them conveyed to those less advanced, according to their various capacities. We are not to imagine, however, that each new issue of ideas shall, in the course of each month, penetrate through the whole gradation of intellect; for the minds of those who enter upon the future life in a state of infancy or childhood, or in a condition of equivalent ignorance, must be very far behind those minds which enter upon the future life in a state of maturity, such as may be acquired in the course of a long life devoted to the accumulation of mental wealth. The new ideas emanating directly from the Fountain-head, may, therefore, in the course of each month penetrate to only a small depth in the intellectual strata. But ideas that are old to the highly gifted will be new to the less endowed, so that each grade of intellect may receive a monthly supply of information, which shall be quite new to the recipient.

The circumstance, however, of there being twelve species of the Tree of Life, appears to indicate that the subjects on which the minds of those receiving instruction are to be engaged shall be altered monthly. Such a

periodical change appears to be needful in order to maintain the cheerful elasticity of the mind, and to prevent the current of thought from flowing too much or too long in one channel. The mind requires a change of food quite as much as the body, and the symbol before us seems to denote that, as in the present, so in the future life, the human mind shall need a variety of moral and intellectual nourishment, and that such shall be amply provided.

Our views on this point will be somewhat affected by the manner in which the phraseology of the original is interpreted. If it be understood to mean that each species of fruit was produced during only one month out of the twelve, we must conclude that the species of ideas to be communicated to the redeemed is to be altered monthly. It is not needful, however, to suppose that the supplies of new ideas emanating from the Fountain-head are to be confined to the periods of new moons, and cease in the intervals. We ought rather to conclude that they shall be continuous throughout the whole period, and merely undergo a change of character at the new moon. This notion is more conformable to the nature of the human intellect, which cannot bear a great mass of new ideas thrown into it at once, but rather loves to imbibe them by slow degrees; so that it may inwardly digest them and fix them in the memory. According to this view then, we may imagine that the minds of the redeemed shall be occupied with one subject during the course of each month, and that the subjects shall be changed monthly, so that they shall be in the course of the year instructed in the complete circle of the sciences.

On the other hand, if we are to understand the phraseology of the original to mean that each of the twelve sorts of fruit was produced every month, so that there were twelve fresh crops of each kind in the year, then we may suppose the metaphysical meaning to be that, during

each month, the redeemed are to partake of all the twelve varieties of mental food in succession, and that at the beginning of each month they shall commence the circle anew.

While it has been inferred that all those ideas, which are absolutely new to the human race at large, are to be communicated directly by Him 'in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' to the more highly gifted intellects, leaving all ideas already possessed by any individuals of the race to be by them diffused among the rest, it is not to be further inferred that the privilege of direct communication with Christ is to be confined to the more highly developed minds.

The phraseology employed in the preceding chapter of the Apocalypse, from the 3rd to the 7th verse inclusive, points to a much more extended and personal intercourse between the Divine King and His people. It is not to be imagined that, to those who love His presence, He will be less accessible when exalted to the throne of His glory, than He was when, in His humiliation, He dwelt among us full of grace and truth.

This great difference, however, may be expected between the two cases. When Christ appeared on earth, His bodily presence was circumscribed by those limits which were imposed by His humanity. Doubtless, in virtue of the union subsisting between His human mind and the Divine, He could be *mentally* present in more than one place at the same instant of time—a power of which we have an instance given, in His own assurance to Nathaniel that, although bodily absent, He yet saw him while under the fig-tree. But in the future state, it may be expected that this power of ubiquity shall be extended to His perceptible presence, so that He may be visibly present (if not objectively at least subjectively), holding immediate intercourse with many different indi-

viduals or assemblages in diverse and far distant places at the same instant of time. He may, as it were, multiply Himself—yet without violation of His unity and individuality; for all who converse with Him, however distant may be their localities, will have on their minds the impression that it is one and the same Being with whom they are holding communion.

It is this frequent and familiar intercourse with their Divine King that will constitute the chief blessedness of the redeemed; so that to suppose any portion of them to be excluded from it would be wholly inconsistent with the perfection of their bliss. This view, however, is not incompatible with that previously suggested, respecting all ideas quite new to mankind—namely, their being first communicated by Christ only to a select few, to be by them disseminated through the mass; for this would be a mere continuance of the law of intellect which now prevails. The intercourse between Christ and the general body of the redeemed may consist merely in His eliciting the progress of each individual mind in moral and intellectual improvement—His recalling their acquired knowledge to their remembrance, and speaking to them kind and encouraging words, while He leaves them to receive all their actual instruction from their more highly endowed fellow-creatures. The continual pleasant interchange of thought will thus, in all probability, be the great and never-ending occupation of the future life; and all, from the highest to the lowest grades of intellect, will be engaged in giving and receiving instruction, so as to maintain a sense of mutual obligation and dependence throughout the great body of the human family. Even the least instructed, who will always constitute the greatest proportion, may derive a large amount of information from each other. One set of ideas may be communicated by a superior instructor to one of the ignorant,

and another to another; while these may be left to interchange the information which they have thus received. Even among the highest grades of intellect the same law may prevail. They may not each derive the whole of their information from the Fountain-head; but each may receive only a portion from that source; while they may be left to obtain one from another what they have not directly derived from the Divine King. Thus, as in the natural world, each may receive his portion in due season, and each in turn experience both the blessedness of him that receives and the still greater blessedness of him that gives.

This law of distribution appears to be shadowed forth in the great miracle of feeding the multitudes. Our Saviour did not go round to each individual of the throng, and give to him directly a portion of food from His own hand; but He gave to His disciples, and they distributed among the people. This same method, as applicable to intellectual bread, we find imperfectly developed even in the present life, yet prevailing to such an extent as to prove it to be a law of nature—a law of the most beneficent tendency, seeing it promotes a feeling of mutual dependence and amity among mankind, so furthering the great end of cementing them into one vast and loving brotherhood. This circumstance renders it all the more probable that a law so beneficial in its operation will subsist among the redeemed in the future life.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LEAVES OF THE TREE OF LIFE.

THE concluding portion of the description given of the Tree of Life runs thus—'And the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations.' Although having primarily a spiritual meaning, these words have doubtless, like those relating to the fruits of the tree, also a subordinate physical signification. The Greek verb here rendered 'healing' has a more extended meaning, for it signifies being serviceable in general. The leaves of a tree are its organs of respiration and the means by which it elaborates its peculiar sap, whence its substance and its fruit are formed. In performing this office they withdraw from the air a large quantity of carbonic acid gas, and fix the carbon, restoring it to the solid state. Hence they reverse the effects produced by animals, whose breathing converts the oxygen of the atmosphere into carbonic acid gas. Were this latter ingredient not thus withdrawn by the action of the leaves of plants, the air would speedily become so vitiated as to be unfit for the respiration of animals. The leaves of trees accordingly do really perform the function of physicians, and are even now 'for the healing of the nations.'

But, in the future state, men shall require no other medicine. The leaves of the Tree of Life shall exert on the air such a purifying influence as to maintain it continually in a state of perfect salubrity—so preventing the

formation of any noxious ingredient which might convey disease to the human frame. The generality of the term here employed, moreover, seems to indicate that, in other respects, these leaves shall be serviceable to the nations; but on that point it is needless to enlarge.

Let us now turn our more particular attention to the metaphysical meaning of the statement respecting the leaves of the Tree of Life, namely, that they were 'for the healing of the nations.' It has been already mentioned that the leaves of a tree are those organs by which it breathes and forms its peculiar sap, whence its fruits are elaborated. Now, as the fruits of the Tree of Life, in a metaphysical point of view, are ideas, it follows that the leaves must, in like manner, represent the means by which those ideas are originated and moulded into form, and by which this life-tree respires. But ideas are thus elaborated by means of words, and their breath is speech: hence the leaves of the Tree of Life must denote words or language—the means by which ideas are formed in the mind, and the medium through which they are conveyed from one mind to another.

It is not difficult to conceive how leaves of this sort should be designed for 'the healing of the nations.' Difference of language is the circumstance, beyond all others, that keeps nations apart and prevents mutual friendly intercourse. It is the disease of the nations that requires the most to be healed: were it removed, diversity of nation would cease, and all mankind would again become one family.

Every man, on awaking in the future life, will have just that amount of language which he possessed when he fell asleep, and no more; while all who die in infancy will have theirs yet to learn. That there shall be at first diversities of speech, seems to be indicated by the emblem of the great multitude which no man could

number, of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, mentioned in the 7th chapter of the Apocalypse and 9th verse. While every man will thus naturally express himself in his own tongue, it is not improbable that, to facilitate mutual intercourse among the redeemed, there may be a renewal of the gift so liberally bestowed on the day of Pentecost, by which the disciples were enabled to understand various languages. This, however, would be only a temporary expedient. Nothing could effectually heal the nations but one common language—that golden dream of the philosopher—and this appears to be what is here metaphorically symbolised by the leaves of the Tree of Life. All the ideas supplied to them in the future life would be conveyed to them through the medium of this universal tongue; and as a vast proportion of those ideas will be new to the race at large, the language in which they are to be conveyed will probably be also new. Thus a period will at length arrive when the new and common language shall supersede all others, which shall thereafter continue to exist only as memorials of the past.

In this manner the nations will be ultimately healed. And it is observable that the phrase 'for the healing of the nations' involves the idea of a gradual process, by which their differences are to be finally removed, and they are to be merged into one great brotherhood, linked together by community of speech, of sentiment, and of ideas. Then shall be fulfilled the prophetic declaration of St. Paul that 'tongues shall cease.'

This new and universal language will doubtless be quite perfect—constructed on the most philosophical principles and natural analogies—so approving itself to the enlightened reason of every man. It will thus be easily acquired, and will, by the law of association, readily fix itself in the memory, so that men will no longer be puzzled by those anomalies and double and doubtful

meanings which are, in the present life, the diseases of human speech.

Such then appears to be the metaphysical signification of the Tree of Life, with its twelve fruits and its healing leaves.

It is curious to note in connection with the foregoing explanation of the metaphysical meaning of the leaves of the tree, and their being available for the healing of the nations, that, according to MM. Huc and Gabet, there grows at Kounboum in Thibet a tree to which religious reverence is paid, from the circumstance that on its leaves are markings resembling the characters of the Thibetian alphabet. As there seems little reason to doubt that Christian missionaries had at an early period penetrated into this region, it appears not improbable that the Apocalyptic description of the leaves of the Tree of Life may have led to the superstitious reverence paid to 'the tree of ten thousand images,'—the appellation given by the Thibetians to this remarkable tree. See M. Huc's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 52.

Although the authority of the French missionaries cannot be regarded as unquestionable, yet to any one who has studied the markings on the leaves of some other plants—especially the various species of Calladium, their statement will appear not altogether improbable. The beautiful red and cream-coloured markings on the leaves of Calladium Wightii in particular, might readily suggest to the warm imagination of the Eastern mind, resemblances to alphabetical characters.

The apostle proceeds to say (v. 3) 'and there shall be no more curse.' This clause has, in the division of the verses, been obviously misplaced; for it ought to have formed the concluding clause of the second verse—leaving the remainder of the third quite distinct. The cessation of the curse has an evident connection with

the fruitfulness of the Tree of Life, and is designed to explain it, by intimating that the curse of barrenness is removed from the soil. Taking the Tree of Life in a metaphysical sense also, it is to it that the removal of the curse bears evident reference. For it will be remembered that, in the biblical account of man's first transgression, it is stated that after his fall he was prevented from approaching the Tree of Life. This was in itself a heavy curse, and its removal indicates that in the future state man is to have that free access to the Tree of Life which he lost by his transgression.

There appears to be no reason to doubt that the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden was quite as much a symbol, as the same tree growing in the streets of the New Jerusalem. The former was probably, like the latter, a double emblem—symbolising not only that life-sustaining food which man was permitted to enjoy before his fall, and which, had he been allowed to continue to partake of it, would have preserved him immortal; but also that mental food which, had he continued to receive it, would have preserved his mind in a state of perpetual progressive improvement. This mental food having been withdrawn, he was subjected to the curse of toiling his way to mental cultivation by means of his reason alone, unaided, save by an occasional ray of light from the Central Sun of intellectual illumination. But this curse is in the future life to be entirely removed; and the redeemed are to be permitted to partake both of the Water of Life and of the fruits of the Tree of Life freely.

There is yet another curse which shall be removed, and which also bears reference to the Tree of Life. The difference of language by which mankind were separated into nations was undoubtedly a curse,—a heavy curse fraught with wars and strife and bloodshed. But by the healing virtues of the leaves of the Tree of Life this curse

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE DIVINE KINGDOM.

THE unfortunate circumstance that the sentence—'And there shall be no more curse,' has been attached to the third instead of the second verse, as it ought to have been, has led our translators into the further mistake of beginning the next sentence with 'but' instead of 'and,' as it is in the original. It ought to be rendered thus—'And the throne of God, even of the Lamb, shall be in her.' St. John had already mentioned this throne as the source whence emanated the river of the Water of Life, which the angel showed him; but he here repeats the information, employing the future tense to denote the continuance of the throne among the redeemed. It was not set up merely to dignify the solemnity of the opening of the new era, but it is to be established for ever. This passage plainly intimates that Christ is to reign personally over the redeemed in the future life through all eternity; for 'of His kingdom there shall be no end.'

The apostle proceeds, 'And His servants shall serve Him.' In the present life His servants can render Him, at the best, only a very imperfect obedience. They are, even the most faithful among them, 'unprofitable servants.' But in the future life their obedience shall be willing and hearty; while their service shall be, not only faithful, but efficient—each performing the duty assigned to him in his appointed sphere.

It will be observed, as a strong confirmation of the views previously propounded in regard to the correct manner of rendering the immediately preceding clause, in which the Deity is associated with the Lamb, that the apostle here uses the singular number as applicable to the Occupant of the throne—'*His* servants shall serve *Him*,' and it is immediately added, 'and they shall see *His* face, and *His* name shall be on their foreheads.' Hence it is evident that the Occupant of the throne is one person—'God even the Lamb,' and that there are not two occupants, 'God *and* the Lamb,' as our translation seems to imply. This circumstance also proves the accuracy of our rendering of all the other passages in which this association of names occurs—'God *even* the Lamb,' as a unity, not 'God *and* the Lamb,' as if there were two.

The next sentence, v. 4, 'And they shall see His face,' fully confirms the views already suggested, that Christ is to be personally present among the redeemed, and that they are all, without exception, to have access to see Him and converse with Him face to face.

The text proceeds—'And His name shall be on their foreheads.' The word 'name' is here, as frequently elsewhere in scripture, used for 'character.' The phrase has probably both a physical and a metaphysical meaning. Physically, it appears to denote that the redeemed shall, in the very expression of their countenances, exhibit their assimilation to the Divine character. They shall be lighted up with the expression of that joy and serenity which shall reign within them, as also of that genuine love and affection, which they shall feel both towards their Redeemer and towards the whole brotherhood of the saved. Even in the present life, this expression of countenance is occasionally seen among those who are inspired with the true spirit of Christianity; how much more conspicuously may it be expected to manifest itself in the life to come!

Viewed in a metaphysical sense, the phrase before us seems to import that the Divine character shall be impressed upon the minds of the redeemed, symbolised by the forehead, the seat of the organs of thought. They shall thoroughly understand the Divine wishes and intentions, and shall conform themselves to these in all respects, so as best to promote their own happiness and the glory of God.

The next sentence (verse 5), 'And there shall be no night there,' is a reiteration of the statement contained in v. 25 of the preceding chapter of the Apocalypse. But its meaning appears to be here more particularly confined to intellectual night, and moral darkness; while its absence is a consequence of the redeemed people's having the Divine character impressed on their foreheads. St. John himself uses a similar metaphor in the beginning of his gospel. 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.' St. Peter also speaks of the word of prophecy as 'a light that shineth in a dark place.' St. Paul likewise says to the Ephesians, 'Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.' And to the Thessalonians, 'Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness.' And to the Romans, 'The night is far spent; the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.' It is this same night which St. Paul declares to have been, even in his day, far spent, of which St. John here affirms that with respect to the Divine kingdom, 'there shall be no night there.'

The next clause is not happily translated—'And they need no candle, neither light of the sun.' The word here rendered 'candle,' is the same as that applied to the Lamb in the 23rd verse of the preceding chapter of the

Apocalypse, and ought to be here, as there, rendered 'luminary.' The correct translation is, 'and they have no need of a luminary and sunshine.' The expression 'they have no need' does not involve the idea of the entire absence of a luminary and sunshine, but simply imports that the redeemed shall not depend for their moral and intellectual illumination upon any subordinate or created source; and the reason of this independence is immediately assigned, 'for the Lord God enlighteneth them.' That the luminary, of which they are to stand in no need, is a moral and intellectual guide becomes evident from this reason; for the light emanating from the Lord God must be moral and intellectual, not physical light. This view is further confirmed by the metaphor which our Saviour applies to John the Baptist—'He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.' In this expression the same word is employed as in the passage under consideration; it is, therefore, of luminaries such as John the Baptist and the other ancient prophets that the redeemed shall, in the future life, have no need. But what is meant by 'sunshine'? Luminaries like John the Baptist might be regarded as meteors traversing the dark face of the sky; but the sunshine is the natural light of the world. It may, therefore, signify metaphysically the general diffusion of education and civilization among mankind, such as subsists in the present life, and the consequent development of human reason; or it may mean education emanating from the centre of civil authority, and sustained by supreme power.

Even were we to give this phraseology a literal interpretation, and understand it to mean any artificial or natural source of physical illumination, the phrase would merely import that the happiness and enjoyments of the redeemed shall be independent of all such; for they

shall have always shining upon them the light of the Divine countenance, and will hence enjoy a perpetual flow of inward happiness, rendering them quite independent of those feelings of physical pleasure which result from the natural sunshine, or the domestic cheerfulness diffused by artificial light. It appears more probable, however, that these phrases are to be taken in a purely metaphysical sense.

The same may he affirmed of the concluding clause of this verse—'And they shall reign for ever and ever.' Where all are to reign, and that continuously for ever, it is evident that the dominion exercised by each individual can extend only to himself. That, however, is of all other dominions the most important and the most difficult to acquire. In the present life, there is a perpetual struggle for supremacy between the natural and the spiritual man; and a continuous self-command is not only the highest aim of ambition, but her most unattainable goal. It is far easier to reign over a kingdom than to reign over self. But in the future life it shall be quite otherwise. Then each individual being guided by sanctified and enlightened reason, and having his will in every respect conformed to the Divine will, there can be no struggle of the flesh against the spirit; but each man's reign over himself shall be perfect, unceasing and unending.

There is nevertheless another sense in which it may be affirmed that the redeemed shall reign for ever and ever. In the present life, man's dominion over the lower animals and the powers of nature is very imperfect, and maintained by a perpetual effort. But in the future life we may expect that, in the case of all the saved, there shall be a fulfilment of the prophecy contained in Psalm viii. verses 5 to 8; which, while it primarily applies to Christ, has a secondary and more enlarged application

to mankind in general—at least to the redeemed—indicating that in his perfect state, man shall have complete dominion over all the lower animals and all the powers of nature, rendering them subservient to his purposes and conducive to his weal.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TESTIFIER.

HAVING concluded his description of the holy city and its polity, the apostle proceeds to narrate the substance of what the angel, after having detailed to him all the particulars concerning the New Jerusalem, further spoke to him—'And he said unto me, these sayings are faithful and true; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.' Some copies read here—'the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets,'—that is the Lord God who infused into the minds of the prophets that spirit by which they were enabled to foretell future events. The variation, however, is unimportant.

The phrase 'the things which must shortly be done,' would be better rendered 'the things which are to happen rapidly'—that is in quick succession. It does not mean that the whole prophecies were to be fulfilled shortly after the time of the apostles, but that the course of events should rapidly hasten towards their final consummation. 'The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness;' for 'with Him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' We are not to measure the course of His providence by our standards of time; but we are to bear

in mind that time itself moves with rapid strides, and that although to us some thousands of years may appear a very long period, they are but as a moment compared with the endless ages of eternity. A similar idea is involved in the expression—'Behold! I come quickly,' that is, at a rapid pace. The phrase does not import that the second advent of Christ was to take place shortly after the time of the apostle, but that He was to come without any delay—that all things are hastening on to their final consummation, although to mortal apprehension the interval may appear long and tedious.

In the phrase 'Behold! I come quickly,' the angel, according to the custom of ambassadors, speaks in the person of the Sovereign by whom he had been sent; while it is observable that, in the immediately preceding sentence, he modestly speaks of himself in the third person 'God sent His angel.' We shall find him in the sequel again speaking in the name of his Lord.

He meanwhile pronounces a blessing on all those who keep the prophecies contained in this book. The book to which he here refers, is most probably the seven-sealed volume, which St. John had seen opened and unrolled. By the expression 'keep' we are to understand the retaining the prophecies in mind with a view to thoroughly understanding them, and watching their fulfilment.

The apostle proceeds to say (verse 8), 'And I, John, saw these things and heard them; and when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, which shewed me these things.' The first clause might be more literally rendered thus—'And I, John, the seer and hearer of these things, also when I had heard and seen, fell down,' &c.

It is remarkable that the apostle, after the repulse he had previously experienced (Rev. xix. 10), should again attempt a similar act of reverence. This circumstance

appears to strengthen the probability that the angel, whom he on the former occasion sought to worship, was he whose glory enlightened the earth (Rev. xviii. 1), not the angel who now talked with him. It is not likely that St. John would a second time offer worship to the same angel, by whom it had been already so peremptorily refused. It appears more probable that the apostle, on hearing the words 'Behold! I come quickly,' had imagined that it was Christ himself, in the disguise of this angel, who talked with him, and that it was under this impression he fell down to worship him. But this angel, like the other, instantly and peremptorily refused the proffered act of homage and in nearly the same terms (v. 9): 'Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets and of them which keep the sayings of this book; worship God.' This translation conveys a somewhat erroneous impression of the meaning of the original; for it appears to import that the angel describes himself as being of the prophets and of those who keep the sayings of the book; whereas the meaning of the original is that he was the fellow-servant of such. The passage would therefore be more correctly rendered thus: 'For I am a fellow-servant with thee, and with the prophets, and with those keeping the doctrines of this book.' He thus indicates that he was a created being and a servant of the Most High God, equally with the prophets and with all by whom the doctrines of the book are kept. The book is here again probably the seven-sealed volume; and the doctrines taught in it are the great truths symbolised by the emblems shown to St. John, coupled with the explanations given to him by the angel.

The heavenly ambassador concludes his rebuke by saying, 'worship God;' thus again directing the attention of the apostle to the supreme Ruler of the universe, as

alone worthy to receive the intended mark of reverence and homage. What a withering reproof is here conveyed to that haughty priesthood which, not content with setting up many other objects, seen and unseen, for the worship of its adherents, goes still further, and arrogating to itself exclusively the office of ambassador from Christ, not only does not refuse, but even demands for its members and more especially for its chief, a reverence and homage which this angelic ambassador so promptly and determinately declined!

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TESTIMONY.

THE apostle goes on to state, verse 18—'And he saith unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.' This injunction is in contrast to the command given to Daniel, who was ordered to seal up his prophecy, for the time was then far distant. On the other hand, the prophecy embodied in the vision of St. John was to commence being fulfilled immediately, and was to continue in course of fulfilment till the end of time. Its prevision extends even beyond that barrier into the interminable vista of eternity. The expression 'seal not' seems to import that the Apocalyptic prophecy, in its entireness, was to remain open to the researches of the minds having wisdom; so that they might compare its delineations with the religious history of the human race, from the earliest dawn of Christianity to its final consummation in the future life.

The 11th verse is curious, as confirming some of the views previously propounded—'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' This passage shows that the fate of man is fixed at the moment of death—that 'as the tree falleth, so must it lie.' In the state which intervenes between death and the resurrection the human mind is in absolute repose. It

receives no justification; he that dies unjust remains unjust still. It undergoes no purification; he that dies filthy remains filthy still. It can make no progress in righteousness; he that dies unrighteous remains unrighteous still. No masses, no prayers for it, can be of the least avail. But neither, on the other hand, is it subject to any further temptation, nor can it become any worse; he that dies righteous remains righteous still; and he that dies holy remains holy still.

No words could more clearly indicate a state of total inactivity: for the human mind is so constituted that it cannot be active without its actions having some moral quality. They must be either good or bad; so that an active mind must be continually becoming either better or worse. The fixedness of moral condition here described, therefore, of necessity implies a state of perfect mental repose.

That these words do not apply to man in the present life is evident; for the voice of the gospel speaks in far other strains. It cries—'Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out'—'Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die?'—Why wilfully rush headlong to your ruin? Neither can the description apply to the human mind in the future state—at least as respects the redeemed; for they shall then be making continual moral and intellectual progress. The passage before us can apply only to *Hades*, or the intermediate state, in which 'there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom,' but all are buried in profound slumber, throughout the whole of that long night, in which our Saviour assures us 'no man can work.'

In the 12th verse, the angel again speaking in the person of Christ his Prince, says, 'And behold! I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according as his work shall be.' The term 'quickly' is here again

to be understood as meaning not immediately but at a rapid pace. Time flies and eternity hastens on. That the final coming of Christ to judge the world at the last day is here referred to, becomes evident from the sequel. His reward shall be with Him. He will come for the express purpose of rewarding every man according as his work shall be, at the judgment day. Observe, it is not according to his creed that every man is to be rewarded, but according to his work. The creed is merely the means to an end; but unless the end be attained, the creed, however sound, is worse than useless. It will only go to increase the condemnation. The good creed must produce good works, and according to the fruit, so shall be the reward.

In the succeeding verse the angel continues to speak in the person of his Sovereign (verse 13), 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.' This is a repetition of the announcement made at the commencement of the vision, and its phraseology has been already explained.

In the 14th verse the angel speaks in his own person: 'Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.' The phrase 'His commandments,' shows that the ambassador is here speaking of his Sovereign in the third person; and prompted doubtless by the dictates of experience, he pronounces those who do His commandments blessed. He further points out that this doing of the Divine commandments is the way to obtain access to the Tree of Life, and entrance to the city through its gates. The expression used in the original means rather 'power' than 'right.' It is literally, 'blessed are they who do His commandments, that their power may be over the Tree of Life, and to enter by the gates into the city.' Here again it will be perceived that

it is not a man's creed but his deed, that puts in his power the Tree of Life; and further, that entrance to the city is to be obtained only through the gates—those gates of righteousness which the Psalmist prays may be set open to him. No man can enter the city except by the way of God's appointment—that is, by an implicit submission both of the will and the understanding to the guidance of God's good Spirit.

The expression here is nearly equivalent to that of our Saviour. 'If any man do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God'—that is, if any man act up to that measure of knowledge of the Divine will which is vouchsafed to him, he shall receive more and more light to enable him to discern the truth of God, and he may expect the fulfilment of that precious promise, 'Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me, and to him that disposeth his way aright, will I show the salvation of God.' Such a man may therefore with confidence adopt the language of the Psalmist: 'Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.'

Christ says of himself, 'I am the door;' but this metaphor is not to be confounded with the emblem of the gates of the city. These have already been shown to typify the knowledge of Divine truth, through which access is to be gained to the holy city. The metaphor, however, is not inconsistent with the symbol; for it is through Christ that we obtain this needful knowledge of Divine truth—and that in two ways; first, by His direct teaching; secondly, and in a still higher sense, by His having 'obtained gifts for men'—especially that precious gift of the Holy Spirit which guides us into all truth. It is in consequence of the atonement or reconciliation effected by Christ, that God sees fit to operate on every human mind, by the influence of His Spirit in such a

manner as to impart a knowledge of Divine truth sufficient to enable the willing receiver to enter into the city through the pearly gates.

The next verse (the 15th) enumerates the characters that are excluded from the holy city—a catalogue so clear and precise that it may be left to make its own impression.

In the 16th verse the angel again speaks in the person of his Sovereign. He says: 'I, Jesus, have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.' Although some copies of the Greek do read '*in* the churches,' and it so stands in Lachmann's edition, yet the received text, and the editions of Griesbach, Bloomfield, and Alford have, '*upon* the churches,' that is, 'on the subject of the churches.' This, although an apparently trivial variation, is yet of great importance; for the reading 'upon,' or 'concerning' the churches, indicates that the whole subject of the Apocalyptic prophecy is the history of the churches—the true church the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and the corrupt church Babylon, that prostitutes herself to the uses of the kings of the earth. The reading '*in* the churches' is awkward and without any clear definite meaning; whereas the phrase 'upon' or 'concerning the churches' conveys a perfectly intelligible idea.

Taking the received reading in its strictly classical meaning, it would signify '*against* the churches;' but the apostles did not always write classical Greek. It must be borne in mind that St. John was not writing in his mother tongue, in which, in all probability, his conversation with the angel was conducted; consequently that he had to translate what he heard into Greek. It is accordingly no matter of surprise that there should be in his writings some peculiar idioms. Now, we

find in his gospel an expression exactly similar to that here employed (12th chapter, 16th verse)—'Then remembered they that these things were written *of* him.' In that phrase St. John employs the identical preposition, governing the same case as in the passage before us; and we are accordingly warranted by this precedent, to prefer the translation—'to testify these things of (or concerning) the churches.'

It is of the greater importance to arrive at the correct meaning of this phrase, because it furnishes a key to the interpretation of the whole Apocalyptic prophecy—showing us that we are not to search in it for anything which does not concern the churches. We are not to hunt for political events—the rise or fall of great empires or kingdoms, or the strife of martial hosts with carnal weapons—far less are we to look for the history of individual men. If reference be made to political events at all, it is only because of their bearing on what relates to either the true or the corrupt church. It is the history of opposing principles that is there sketched; the combat of truth with error, of light with darkness, of sincerity with hypocrisy, of simplicity with vanity, of candour with deceit, of purity with corruption, of idolatry in all its forms with the worship of the one living and true God.

In the concluding clause of this verse, the angel, speaking in the person of his Prince, says: 'I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.' He thus identifies himself with the Lamb that had been sacrificed and that was alone found worthy to open the seven-sealed volume, and who, in the 5th chapter of the Apocalypse, verse 5, is called 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David.' In describing Himself as both 'the root and offspring of David,' the speaker beautifully blends the divinity with the humanity of Christ. As respects the former, He is the root of David, and as

respects the latter, his offspring. In using the word 'root' He refers to the prophecy of Isaiah—'And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse.' In calling Himself the 'offspring' of David He alludes to the words of the same prophet—'And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots;' and also to the prophecy of Zecharias—'For behold I will bring forth My servant the Branch;' and again—'Behold, the man whose name is the Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord.' In calling Himself 'the bright and morning star' again, He refers to the prophecy of Balaam—'There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.'

These references to the predictions of the ancient prophets are obviously designed for the purpose of rendering it clear that He, by whom the angel had been commissioned, was no other than the promised Messiah, to whom all those prophecies relate.

In the next verse the angel continues to speak in the name of his Sovereign—(verse 17) 'And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' This verse embodies the free invitation of the gospel message. Both the Spirit and the Bride say 'come'—that is, the Holy Spirit, by working secretly on the human mind, urges all men to come to the Fountain of living waters, and partake of the water of life freely. The language of the Bride, the true church, is of the same tenor. That of the corrupt church is very different. She says—'Come to me; I am the way, the truth, and the life; I alone can claim infallibility; I only can give you the true bread from heaven; rely on my saints, my mediators—especially the virgin queen of heaven, whose assumption and imma-

culate conception I have decreed. She is all-powerful to procure the Divine favour for her devotees. Buy of me pardons and indulgences. Trust to me to deliver your souls from purgatorial flames, and to obtain for you admission into heaven; for I only have the keys of heaven and hell.' But the Bride, the true church, says only, 'Come'—come, not to me, not to any saint or angel, or other created mediator, but to Christ—to the Fountain of living waters, and there drink freely without money and without price.

The Spirit and the Bride are they who give this invitation; the entreaty of the Bride is insufficient without that of the Spirit; while the solicitation of the Spirit is enough without that of the Bride. The latter is merely one of the means through which the Spirit plies His invitations. The Bride is not ubiquitous. There are regions of the earth in which her voice has never yet been heard. Not so with the Spirit. His influence knows no geographical bounds. There is no human mind left without His invitation. Where all external means are absent, He speaks to the inward ear, saying, 'Come.' Nor, as respects external means, does He confine himself to the voice of the Bride. He has other and more universal preachers, who declare the glory of God and say, 'Come.'

To these other preachers there is a beautiful allusion in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. After asking—'How then shall they call on Him, in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in Him, of whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear without a preacher?'—He adds—'But I say, have they not heard? yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' St. Paul here makes an obvious reference to Psalm xix.—'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firma-

ment showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.' It is to these preachers that St. Paul refers as having proclaimed the truth respecting the Creator of all things, throughout the whole earth; for he says again—'For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen —being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.'

In the absence then of the voice of the Bride, the Spirit makes use of the voice of those universal preachers; and that voice there is no man who has not heard; so that, between the internal promptings of the Spirit and the external voice of those exponents of the glory of God, men are left without excuse, if they keep their eyes and their ears fast closed, and, resisting the secret influences of the Spirit, worship the works of their own hands or the creations of their own fancy.

All those who hear the invitation themselves are invited to give it to others,—'And let the hearer say, Come.' All who have listened to the inward whisper of the Spirit, the suasive tongue of the Bride, or the silent eloquence of the heavenly bodies, and who have fully understood the import of their teaching, are desired to join in proclaiming the universal invitation, 'Come.'

We have next the persons to whom the invitation is given—the thirsty and the willing. There must be a desire for spiritual life and a readiness to receive it. The will is urged by the invitation; but if it steadily oppose itself to the beseeching word 'come,' there will be no desire for the water of life. Hence we are warned, 'Resist not the Spirit.' 'Quench not

the Spirit.' But, on the other hand, there is no other qualification required for partaking of the water of life than a thirst for it, and a willingness to receive the soul-refreshing draught. All who have these two qualifications are invited to come and partake freely. Doubtless both the thirst and the willingness must be engendered by the Spirit, who will make us 'willing in the day of His power.' But He merely urges; He does not coerce the will; and man still remains responsible for his resistance to the promptings of that benign influence; while, if he so resist, he has only himself to blame if he cannot obtain access to the water of life thus freely offered, on the sole condition of its being willingly received.

CHAPTER XIX.

FENCING THE PROPHECY.

THE integrity of this important prophecy is strictly guarded in the following solemn words of warning—(verses 18 and 19). 'For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.'

It is very difficult to arrive at the correct meaning of the first clause of the above quoted passage—partly owing to differences in the reading of different copies of the original, and partly owing to the translation given in our version, which, although supported by the texts of Lachmann, Griesbach, and Alford, is not a correct rendering of the original as it stands in the received text, which is supported, although with some hesitation, by Bloomfield. In the received text, the verb employed is the same as that used by St. Paul in Romans viii. 16: 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' It involves the idea of giving joint testimony, of adding one's testimony to that of another. But besides this circumstance, the verb is not in the active, but either in the middle or the passive voice.

If it be in the former, the meaning is, 'For I jointly with the parties before mentioned (namely the Spirit and the Bride) bear witness of Myself.' But if the verb be in the passive voice, the meaning will be, 'For I am jointly testified of to every hearer of the words of this book' that is, 'I am testified of both by the Spirit and the Bride.' If this be the correct reading, then this clause clearly belongs to the preceding sentence, and not to that which follows it. So read, the passage will stand thus—'And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let the hearer say, Come, and let the thirsty come, and let the willing take of the water of life freely; for I am jointly testified of to every hearer of the words of the prophecy of this book.' According to this view, the last clause contains the reason assigned for the exhortation given in the immediately preceding part of the sentence, to every hearer to unite in the invitation to the thirsty and the willing to come and take of the water of life freely. This reading limits the word 'hearer' in the exhortation to the hearer of the words of the prophecy—not, however, with the outward ear, but with the understanding heart; while the reason why every such hearer is urged to say 'Come' is that to him Christ is jointly testified of by the Spirit and the Bride, in the prophetic symbols of this book; and he who receives this testimony is bound to do his utmost to invite all to come and partake freely of that water of life which Christ alone can bestow.

Such is the view we must take if we are to adhere to the reading of the received text; but Griesbach, Lachmann, and Alford substitute for the verb which denotes the giving of joint testimony, that which means simply to testify—throwing it moreover into the active voice. They omit the 'for,' replacing it by the personal pronoun 'I,' reading—'I testify to every hearer.' If we adopt this reading, we must regard the substance of the

testimony to be, not what precedes but what follows. To this reading, however, there are two objections. Were the subject of the testimony what follows, it seems improbable that the connecting conjunction 'that' would have been omitted—'I testify *that* if any man,' &c. We should have secondly a confusion of the speakers. It is evident from the tenor of what follows, in which the angel speaks of God in the third person, that the declaration beginning 'If any man,' &c., is made by him, speaking as an ambassador in his own person, and not in the person of the Deity, by whom he was sent. The attaching of the words 'I testify,' &c. to the succeeding clause therefore involves too sudden a transition from 'I' the Sovereign to 'I the ambassador.' According to the other reading again, this distinction is kept quite clear. What is spoken by the angel in the person of his Lord ends with the word 'book,' and he begins a separate sentence with the words 'If any man,' &c., in which he speaks in his own person as he had previously done in the 9th 10th and 11th verses.

For these reasons it appears that there is some advantage in adhering to the words of the received text, and translating them thus—'For I am jointly testified of to every hearer of the words of the prophecy of this book,' attaching this clause to the 17th verse, beginning the 18th verse with the words, 'If any man,' &c., and throwing the 19th into the same sentence. The uncertainty attending the question of the correct reading of the original, however, is too great to admit of decisiveness in forming an opinion on the point.

The phrase 'the plagues written in this book,' refers to the plagues of the seven vials mentioned in the Apocalypse, and shows that the emblems shadowing forth those plagues, were parts of the contents of the seven-sealed volume, which is that mentioned here as 'this

book.' In the 19th verse Griesbach, Lachmann, Bloomfield, and Alford read 'from the Tree of Life' instead of 'from the book of life;' and it is so rendered in the margin of many English bibles. This certainly appears to be the preferable reading; because we have afterwards mentioned, among the deprivations of the guilty person, the taking away of his part from the things written or described in this book. It is said of the redeemed, that their name or character is described in the Lamb's book of life; and every one whose character corresponds to that description will be entitled to all the enjoyments of the future life. It is hardly congruous therefore with this idea, to say that God will take away any one's part out of the book of life. But the connection of the Tree of Life with the holy city is so intimate, as to render it much more probable that it should be said that God will take away his part from the Tree of Life, and out of the holy city, and from the things described in this book.

It is of more importance, however, to attend to the nature of the prohibition, which is thus enforced by such awful denunciations and threats. It is evidently designed to guard the prophecies from alteration. They predict the corruption of the church; and it might therefore be foreseen that there would arise, in the minds of the adherents of the corrupt and corrupting church, a strong desire to make in these prophecies such alterations as might tend to deceive men in regard to their being applicable to her. Hence the necessity of fencing them round by so strong a prohibition, enforced by such terrible threats.

This prohibition is not, however, to be limited to mere alterations of the text of the prophecies; it applies to all wilful misrepresentations of their meaning, by attempting either to withhold or explain away the truths which they reveal, or by misapplying them to mere political, instead

of spiritual affairs. It is designed to impress on all expositors of these predictions the necessity of exercising extreme caution and care, to guard both their meaning and their context against either addition or subtraction.

The prohibition is not, on the other hand, intended to deter men from minutely examining these prophecies, and endeavouring, with a humble dependence on the promised enlightenment of the Divine Spirit, to ascertain their true meaning; for a blessing is pronounced on those who keep the words of this prophecy—who retain them and revolve them in their minds, with a view to discover their signification and watch their fulfilment. What the prohibition aims at, is our approaching this investigation without due preparation, or under the influence of preconception and prejudice without perfect candour and impartiality, or in a vain and self-reliant spirit without a due feeling of entire dependence on Divine aid.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HASTENING OF THE END.

To the solemn warning by which the integrity of the prophecy is guarded succeed words of more cheering import (verse 20): 'He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen, even so come Lord Jesus.' A portion of the beauty and force of the original is lost in this translation. It would have been better had the passage been rendered more literally thus: 'He, testifying these things, saith, Yea, I come quickly. Amen, yea, come Lord Jesus.'

The first clause of this verse confirms our view that the angel, both in this and the preceding sentence, commencing, 'If any man,' &c., is speaking in his own person as ambassador and not in the person of his Sovereign; for, 'He testifying,' obviously refers to Christ, who says 'Yea, I come quickly.' The angel therefore speaks of Christ in the third person, and affirms of Him that He gives this assurance of His coming at a rapid pace. Christ is said to be 'He testifying these things,' because it is previously averred that 'Jesus had sent His angel to testify these things concerning the churches.' Hence Christ is the Testifier—the angel being merely the medium through whom the testimony is given.

The assurance 'I come quickly' is here repeated for the third time, with the word 'yea' preceding it, in order to enforce the asseveration. This mode of repeating a pro-

mise or prophecy thrice is not unusual in Scripture, and is always designed to indicate the importance of the matter involved, and the perfect certainty that the event is to happen.

The 'amen' is probably the utterance of the apostle rather than of the angel, and is introductory to his responsive prayer, 'Yea, come Lord Jesus.' This aspiration must not be so far misunderstood as to be supposed to imply a desire in the mind of the apostle to depart this life; it is rather the expression of a fervent wish for the rapid fulfilment of these prophecies, and the final triumph of Christ's kingdom by the ingathering of all the redeemed. It is therefore equivalent to the second petition of the Lord's prayer, 'Thy kingdom come.'

To a full understanding of this petition, it is needful to bear in mind the distinction between real physical duration, as measured by the motions of the heavenly bodies, and ideal or mental duration, as measured by the succession of the thoughts of the human mind. Between these two there is often a vast difference. A few moments spent in an agony of fear or suspense will appear like an hour; while an hour passed in some highly interesting conversation will seem but a few moments. Again, many hours spent in very deep slumber, or still more, in a state of utter unconsciousness, will appear like a single instant.

Granting that the number of the redeemed is definite and fixed in the Divine counsels, it is plain that no good end would be served by continuing the existence of the human race a single day beyond the period when this number shall have been made up. The sooner it is completed, therefore, the sooner will the temporal system be brought to an end, and the whole human race be reduced to a condition of perfect unconsciousness. After this consummation, an indefinite period of real duration must

intervene, between the destruction of the present system of the world by fire, as foretold by St. Peter, and its renovation into that new heaven and new earth described by St. John, in which the redeemed are to dwell for ever, under the personal reign of their Divine King. But this intervening space of physical duration, of whatever length it may really be, will have absolutely no apparent magnitude. It will resemble the dog-star which, although many times larger than the sun, has, even when viewed with the most powerful telescope, no appreciable size, appearing like a mere luminous point. To human apprehension, therefore, the interval between the extinction of the old system and the introduction of the new will, by reason of the universal unconsciousness, appear only as the twinkling of an eye.

The period for the commencement of a new order of things, when the new heaven and the new earth are to be fully prepared for the reception of its inhabitants, and when the Divine King is to come to judge the whole human race, and to take up His abode with the redeemed, may or may not be absolutely fixed in the counsels of Omniscience; but however remote that epoch may actually be, yet, so far as mankind is concerned, it will appear to follow immediately after the termination of the mortal career of the last of our race. Hence this latter period will be, to all human apprehension, identical with that of the second coming of Christ; it is for the arrival of this epoch that we are taught to pray in the words, 'Thy kingdom come,' and it is this same petition which St. John adopts when he says, 'Yea, come Lord Jesus.'

Our being instructed thus to pray shows that, although the epoch of the commencement of the eternal state may perhaps be absolutely fixed, the period of the termination of the temporal system is not determined, but left contingent on the ingathering of the appointed number of the

saved. It is an event which all men may hasten by their exertions; and it is for this reason that the shortening of this period is represented to be an object of desire to all Christians. The more rapidly Christianity spreads, and the faster the harvest of the redeemed is gathered in, the sooner will the temporal system terminate; and then whatever interval may have to elapse between that event and the day of judgment will to all human minds appear as naught.

It has already been pointed out that there is in operation a law, by which the majority of the human race is secured to Christ; for to Him are given all who die in infancy and childhood, actual or virtual, while the number thus gathered in is so regulated as to constitute the greater half of those who are born into the world. Hence it will be only of those attaining to mature years, that any portion will be lost. It is obviously needful to the attainment of the great end in view—the ingathering of the fixed number of redeemed souls, that a considerable, though not the larger proportion of the race, should attain to years of maturity, and that this portion should, through the exercise of their moral responsibility, run the hazard of failure. But in their exposure to this risk there is no real hardship; for not one can be lost except through his own perverse wilfulness; while he is, on the other hand, placed in a position of honourable responsibility in which, if he by God's help acquit himself well, he will attain to a proportionally higher eminence in the future life.

Now, in consequence of this law, by which a majority of the race is secured to Christ, there arises a limit, beyond which the total number of mankind cannot extend, namely, twice the appointed number of the redeemed; and as there must be a fixed period of time within which the race would, by the established laws

of population, attain this amount, so there must be a certain limit known to the Deity, beyond which the temporal system cannot extend. On the other hand, as it is obvious from scripture that all are not to be saved, the number of the race must considerably exceed that of the redeemed; consequently there must be a lower limit of duration. The temporal system cannot possibly cease, until the number of the race shall, by the operation of the laws of population, exceed that of the saved. Hence the termination of the temporal system must be somewhere between those two limits.

We may, however, make a still nearer approximation. Of those who attain to the age of moral responsibility, our Saviour assures us that only the smaller proportion will be saved; for He speaks of those who enter the strait gate and tread the narrow path that leads to life as being few; while of those who enter the wide gate and traverse the broad way that leads to destruction, He avers that they are many. He speaks of this—not as being a moral necessity, but rather as a subject of reproach to men,—lamenting over it as a melancholy moral fact. We are therefore not permitted to estimate the probable proportion of the lost at less than one-fourth of the entire race; consequently, the lowest probable limit, that can be assigned to the total number of mankind, is one-third more than the fixed number of the redeemed.

Thus the lower limit of the duration of the temporal system may be taken to be the period required for the multiplication of the human race, by the operation of the laws of population, till the total number born into the world shall exceed the appointed number of the redeemed by about one-third of its amount. Between these two limits —namely, twice the number of the redeemed, and one-third more than their number, the sum total of the race may be any amount whatever. So with the duration

of the temporal system. It may terminate at any period between that which would be required for the race to multiply to one-third more than the whole of the saved, and that which would be requisite for its multiplication to twice their total. Now, the number of the redeemed being fixed, and the laws for the increase of population being also in all likelihood fixed, these two limits are probably capable of being ascertained with almost mathematical precision. These limits must be perfectly known to the Divine Mind, and on the supposition that the number of the saved is truly indicated by the dimensions of the holy city, they are capable of being ascertained with some degree of approximation to the truth, even by the human mind. In forming such an approximation, however, due allowance must be made for the operation of the great development of Christianity which is predicted to characterise a thousand years of the period; for during that epoch the number of those rescued from self-destruction may be greatly augmented. It appears probable, nevertheless, that this harvest of souls may do no more than compensate for the slowness of the ingathering at other periods; and that it will not go so far as to neutralise the effect of that state of the human will which led our Lord to declare that, viewing the race as a whole, the major part of those who attain to mature years would run the road to ruin.

The space of time which separates the two limits of the duration of the temporal system may extend to many centuries; and within these two limits the period of the termination of the system may be mainly affected by human agency. For it has pleased the Creator to put it in the power of mankind to shorten the interval, by lessening the number of the self-destroyed. This is evidenced by the manner in which St. Peter explains the apparent delay in bringing the temporal system to a

close. He says: 'But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.' Thus the long-suffering and patience of God are shown to be the causes of this delay—His unwillingness that any should perish, His desire that all should come to repentance—a desire confirmed to us by the testimony of St. Paul, who, in exhorting that prayer be made for all descriptions of men, says: 'For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.' It is thus clear that God has not predetermined the destruction of any man, but, on the contrary, in each individual case he uses all means compatible with the freedom of the will to prevent the self-destruction of the soul. It is further evidenced by the above quoted passages, that God has not predetermined the precise period when the door of mercy is to be closed to the human race, but has left that event to depend, within certain limits, on the free agency of the human mind.

Accordingly, when we pray 'Thy kingdom come,' or join with the apostle in saying, 'Yea, come Lord Jesus,' we pray for a diminution of the number of the lost; and we are stimulated to use every exertion to lessen their proportion. It is not in the power of man to add to, or take from the appointed number of the redeemed; but God has left it within his power to add to or take from the indeterminate number of the lost. The lower that the united exertions of Christian men, in saving their fellows from the effects of their own perverse wilfulness, can reduce the proportion of the lost, the sooner

will they bring about the termination of the Lord's harvest; for we may rest assured that the temporal system shall not be prolonged a single day beyond the period when the last of the appointed number of the redeemed shall have fallen asleep.

The temporal system closed, the indefinite period that may have to elapse between that event and the final renovation of the world, from the chaos to which it is then to be reduced, however long it may really be, will to the whole human race appear as nothing; for all will be wrapped in universal slumber, until the dawn of that bright morning which is for ever to terminate the night in which no man can work.

Thus we see how beautifully, in this instance, the fixity of the Divine decrees is rendered consistent with the freedom of the human will. The number of the redeemed is fixed; but the number of the lost is not; so that no man need be included among the latter, except by the perverse exercise of his own free will. The day of judgment and the commencement of the everlasting era may both be absolutely determined; but the day for the termination of the temporal system is not fixed, and shall come as a thief in the night. It is left to depend on the ingathering of the Lord's harvest—a consummation which may be furthered by the combined efforts of mankind, although the moment of its completion cannot be known to man. Nevertheless by thus expediting the arrival of this uncertain epoch we, virtually at least, hasten the approach of the final coming of Christ; for to all human apprehension, the latter event will seem to follow the former in the twinkling of an eye.

We have said that the exact period of the commencement of the new and eternal state, to be ushered in by the day of judgment, may or may not be absolutely fixed in the Divine counsels. The only scriptural averment

bearing directly on the subject is that contained in St. Paul's address to the Athenians, in which he says (Acts xvii. 31), 'Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained.' This asseveration, however, does not amount to the same thing as saying that God has actually fixed the very day in which he will judge the world, although it might bear that interpretation. It may nevertheless equally well be understood to mean merely that He hath appointed that there shall be a day in which He shall judge the world, which is sure to arrive, yet without His having fixed the precise epoch.

To every careful student of Scripture it must appear evident, that the Supreme Ruler of the universe subordinates His government of the physical world to His designs respecting His moral and responsible creatures. In order to counteract the effects of moral evil, He does not refrain from interfering with the usual operation of His own physical laws, notwithstanding these are the wisest and best. It would therefore be quite in accordance with this view of the Divine government to give to the above quoted averment the second interpretation, and regard it as declaring merely, that God has appointed that there shall be a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained.

We should thus be at liberty to suppose that the Divine Ruler may have left the arrival of the day in which He will judge the world to depend on the ingathering of the redeemed; for as in His sight a thousand years are as one day, it must be to Him indifferent at what precise period He shall terminate the present system of the world and create it anew. His benevolence would lead us to conclude that He will not defer the period when the redeemed are to enter on their life of everlasting

happiness, a single day beyond what is necessary for the elaboration of His moral purposes with respect to the human race. We may hence legitimately infer, that, as soon as the number of the redeemed shall be made up, not only will the present temporal system be brought to an end, but the work of renovating the world will be forthwith begun.

This view would give a more enlarged and encouraging meaning to the petition 'Thy kingdom come;' because, by forwarding the ingathering of the redeemed, it is to a certain extent put in the power of mankind themselves to hasten, not only virtually but actually, the commencement of the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

Let every reader of the words of the Apocalyptic prophecy then, not only add his 'Amen, yea, come, Lord Jesus,' to that of the beloved disciple, but let each, in his own sphere, exert himself to hasten His arrival by striving to win souls to Christ, so urging forward the ingathering of the appointed number of the saved, and lessening the indeterminate number of the lost; in the belief that, while thus acting, he is aspiring to the high honour of being a fellow-worker with God.

APPENDIX.

ON THE PROBABLE LAW OF INCREASE OF THE HUMAN RACE.

THE prevalence of law and order in all the proceedings of the Infinite Mind that rules the universe renders it probable, that the multiplication of mankind on the earth may have been regulated by some law which a careful investigation may possibly discover.

Let it be assumed that the present races of mankind have all sprung from the eight persons composing the family of Noah, the only survivors of the flood. Twenty-seven reduplications from those eight individuals would amount to 1,073,751,824, and one-tenth more would be 1,181,116,006, or in round numbers 1,200 millions, which, according to the general estimate, is about the present population of the world. Estimating the habitable dry land of the globe at about 51 millions of square miles, it will be found that the thirtieth reduplication from the first eight individuals, which would bring up the number of the earth's inhabitants to nearly 8,590 millions, would also make the average density of the population about 168 per square mile. This being very nearly the density of the population of France, which may be regarded as a country of average fertility, peopled nearly up to the limit of its self-supporting power, it may be fairly assumed as being the extreme limit of the average density of population for the whole globe, as now constituted. It may accordingly be inferred that, were the entire population of the world ever to reach its thirtieth reduplication from the first eight

individuals, all further increase would cease, and the number of the earth's inhabitants would thenceforward remain almost stationary.

The subject of inquiry then is, whether it may be possible to discover a law by which the successive reduplications of the population may have been governed. A little consideration will suffice to show that, in a general view, these must have succeeded each other much more rapidly at first than they did subsequently: and what falls to be ascertained is the probable law which has regulated the increase of the intervals between the successive reduplications.

Our views on this point must be greatly influenced by the ideas which we entertain respecting the general chronology of the world—a subject on which there is much diversity of opinion. So intimate however is the relation between the law of increase of the human race, and the chronology of its history, that the investigation of the former may throw some light on the latter; for that chronology will be the most probable which best agrees with the law of population that may, on other considerations, be regarded as presenting the highest amount of likelihood. Nor are such other considerations wanting. We have fortunately certain land-marks to guide us with respect to the increase of the population, and certain conditions which must be fulfilled by any law of that increase, in order to its possessing a claim to probability.

The first of these land-marks is the great event of the general dispersion of mankind. It is evident that the number of the race must have been very considerable, before they were fit to be scattered over a large extent of the earth's surface to found new colonies and nations. The interval between the deluge and the dispersion must therefore have been of sufficient length to admit of such a considerable increase of numbers.

We have next the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, and the census of that nation which was taken immediately after that event. The results of that census are a guide thus far, that we must suppose such a general increase in the population of the globe up to that time, as shall not give the Israelites an improbable preponderance in numbers over the other nations of the earth.

Thirdly, we have a second census of the Israelites in the reign

of King David. Although the returns of that enumeration are differently stated in the books of II. Samuel and I. Chronicles; yet from these numbers there may be formed a general idea of the rate at which the species multiplied during that period of its history.

We have, fourthly, a statement of the population of Egypt at the time of the Persian invasion, coupled with the averment in the Book of Exodus, that the number of the Israelites exceeded that of the Egyptians, when these two nations were separated; there is, fifthly, the Roman census, and we have, lastly, a general idea of the present population of the globe.

Again there are certain conditions which any series representing the rate of the increase of the earth's population must fulfil. It must, first of all, exhibit an augmentation in the intervals between the successive reduplications—that augmentation being very gradual at first, and becoming very extensive in later years. This view is rendered necessary by the details which have come down to us respecting ancient battles, showing that the population of the world early attained a very considerable development, and that its increase in later ages has been comparatively slow. It was obviously necessary to the replenishment of the globe, that a very rapid multiplication should take place at the earlier stages of human history; and we accordingly observe, that for several centuries after the deluge the rate of mortality was very low. During that period the rate of increase would nearly coincide with the rate of productiveness. As time passed, however, these two rates would, by the operation of the law of mortality, gradually diverge from each other, until their difference became very considerable—that difference being represented by the death-rate.

The capacity of the globe to sustain its population being limited, the number of the race can never exceed that amount, of which the fertility of the earth will admit; consequently, the rates of productiveness and mortality must continually approach each other—so gradually reducing the rate of increase, until, the two former rates becoming equal, the latter would be extinguished, and the population would become stationary; provided the temporal system were continued so long. On the grounds before stated, it is assumed that this equalisation would take place after

the thirtieth reduplication. Analogy leads to the inference that this limit will be reached not suddenly, but by very slow degrees: consequently a law representing the diminution of the rate of increase must be such as to present a decreasing series, which would become exhausted by thirty reduplications of the population from the first eight individuals.

That law of increase, then, will be the most probable which, while it fulfils those conditions, at the same time exhibits such a general approximation to the numbers of the population at the different epochs before enumerated, as shall possess a certain amount of likelihood; while that chronology will be the most worthy of reliance which shall best accord with such a law of population.

Of the various systems of chronology which have been propounded, only three appear worthy of examination in connection with this subject. These are, first, the chronology of the Bible according to the Hebrew version; second, the same according to the Septuagint version; and, third, the Egyptian chronology gathered from the fragments of Manetho, and from the monumental inscriptions discovered on the banks of the Nile. The two former claim our first attention; because they present themselves in the form of a regular written genealogical record. It is well known that the Hebrew text differs widely from that of the Septuagint, in the passages from which the chronology is deduced. The genealogy in the Septuagint, for example, makes the interval between the deluge and the birth of Abraham 1128 years; whereas the Hebrew text makes it only 292, the difference being no less than 836 years.

It is hence evident that, in one or other of these versions, the text must have been falsified; and the law of population supplies a method of discovering on which side the falsification most probably lies. In both records it is said that one of the ancestors of Abraham was called Peleg, in commemoration of the dispersion of mankind, and the division of the earth among its different tribes. Now, as names were in general given at a very early age, the dispersion must be presumed to have taken place during the fancy of Peleg, if not in the very year of his birth. This presumption is strengthened by the circumstance, that this Patriarch did not, according to the Hebrew version, survive his father Heber, who was the head of the Hebrew nations, and was alive during

the dispersion: so that the name could not have been bestowed, because of its having occurred during the reign of Peleg as a sovereign Patriarch—a position which he could not hold during the life-time of his parent.

We have thus an approximate date fixed for the dispersion, namely, the birth or infancy of Peleg. According to the Hebrew text, Peleg was born 101 years after the deluge: according to the Septuagint 526 years. Which is the more probable? In 101 years, the population of the globe at the most rapid rate of increase, could not have undergone more than ten reduplications from the family of Noah; and it is not likely to have multiplied so very fast. The population then at the end of 101 years could not have amounted to more than 8,000 individuals. Now it is beyond the limits of likelihood to suppose, that a society so small should have combined to build a tower that should rise to heaven, or that so inconsiderable a number should have been scattered over the face of the earth, to found new colonies and kingdoms. Whereas in the course of 526 years, the race might have attained such a development as to render both these events not improbable. Indeed, the Hebrew chronology, between the deluge and the birth of Abraham, will be found irreconcilable with any continuous law of population, and incapable of bringing up the general population of the globe to a probable amount, at the date of the Exodus. There need therefore be little hesitation in preferring the Septuagint to the Hebrew version of the genealogy of Abraham.

In adopting this genealogy, however, as the basis of chronology, in connection with the law of population, it is needful to suppose, that the ancestors of Abraham were not always the eldest sons of their respective fathers, but that each Patriarch had many other sons besides the one named; otherwise we should be in little better plight, as respects the law of population, with the Septuagint version than with the Hebrew. On this point, however, we need not hesitate; for in the very first instance, namely that of Arphaxad, it is evident, from the narrative itself, that he was not the eldest but the third son of Shem; while from the very few names given in the text it is obvious, that only those persons are mentioned who are distinguished by some peculiarity, either as founders of dynasties or as ancestors of Abraham.

After the birth of Abraham, the chronology becomes more

certain. Both records fix the interval between his birth and his emigration at 75 years, and the interval between the latter event and the Exodus at 430 years; though by an accidental omission, the Hebrew text makes it appear as if the whole of those 430 years had been passed by Abraham and his descendants in Egypt; whereas the true rendering is, 'in Canaan and Egypt,' as given in the Septuagint. As regards the interval between the Exodus and the founding of Solomon's temple, there is again a discrepance between the versions—the Septuagint making it forty years less than the Hebrew; so that although the subsequent interval, from the founding of the temple to the commencement of the Christian era, is pretty well fixed—chronologers differing only about three years—there is some little difficulty in fixing the precise date of the Exodus; but Archbishop Usher's date, B.C. 1491, may be assumed as nearly correct.

Reckoning then from the year A.D. 1870, we may estimate the interval thence to the Exodus at 1,870 + 1,491 = 3,361. Thence to the birth of Abraham at 505 years—thence to the dispersion, according to the Septuagint, at 641 years, and thence to the deluge at 526 years; in all 5,033 years between A.D. 1870 and the flood.

It remains, then, to find whether the several reduplications of the human race, which have taken place during that period, can be distributed over the interval according to any mathematical law, which shall present us with a series, fulfilling all the conditions before indicated. The time in which a population will double itself, is found by dividing the logarithm of 2 by the logarithm of the mean rate of increase for the period *plus* unity. Our mode of procedure must therefore be to suppose each reduplication to have been governed by a certain mean rate of increase, and the logarithms representing those average rates, added to unity, to have decreased according to a certain mathematical progression. It is accordingly to these logarithms that the law is to be applied. Now it will be found easy to reduce them to a very simple law, if we adopt the above chronology; but if we take the Hebrew version of the genealogy of Abraham, this will be found impracticable.

The law, then, which governs the logarithms applicable to the Septuagint chronology is, that they decrease by a series of differences which ultimately resolve themselves into a common

difference in the fourth degree, amounting to 0·000,001,7. This result having been attained, it is easy to construct a table, that shall present a series, which will satisfy the conditions required. The first of the annexed tables has accordingly been constructed on this principle. It shows the manner in which the differences of the logarithms of the rates of increase lead to the above-mentioned common difference and ultimately become exhausted. The first column marked N.R. shows the number of reduplications, beginning with the sixth, the earlier ones being thrown together. The second column shows the rate of increase regulating each reduplication. The third gives the logarithms of those rates plus unity; while the remaining four columns show the first, second, third, and fourth differences of those logarithms—the last being constant. This table thus exhibits the law of the series.

Besides determining the periods of the successive reduplications of the species, it is further needful to ascertain approximately the number of individuals embraced in each reduplication. For this purpose it is necessary to assume an average rate of productiveness for the period, to divide it by the mean rate of increase for the same period, and to multiply the quotient by the number of the population at the beginning of that particular reduplication. In assuming an average birth-rate, we have the guidance of long experience to show, that the mean rate of productiveness has varied little throughout the history of mankind. It has long been noted that, on an average, the number of births in any century is about three times the number of the mean population of that century—thus corresponding to an average yearly birth-rate of nearly thirty-three per thousand.

At the very early stages, the birth-rate must have been identical with the rate of increase by reason of the absence of deaths. For the ninth reduplication, the rate of increase was 0·033,809, while for the tenth it was only 0 028,183, so that the birth-rate must have begun to diverge from the rate of increase at this point. The former may accordingly be fairly assumed to have decreased from 0·033,809 by very slow degrees, and it will be found that a constant decrease of 0·000,045 will give a fair representation of the birth-rates which probably prevailed during the successive reduplications, and which will at the same time nearly correspond to the law, that the births in any century are about three times its mean population.

The second table exhibits the probable manner of the increase of the human species, founded on these several elements of calculation, and on the chronology previously assumed to be the most worthy of reliance. The first column, marked N. R., gives the number of reduplications; the second, the amount of the population at the end of each successive reduplication. The third column shows the date at which each was completed; the fourth, the space of time that each occupied. The fifth column exhibits the probable number of individuals embraced in each reduplication, and the sixth the birth-rates from which these are estimated, calculated on the principle above explained.

At the beginning of the table the first five reduplications have, for convenience, been thrown together, as having taken place in 55 years; because, on minute analysis, this was found to be a reasonable space of time for that early epoch; but from this point the intervals between the reduplications increase in a regular series, according to the law which regulates the logarithms. Although only 27 have as yet been completed, the table has been extended so as to embrace the remaining three, of which the series will admit, but it will from the first table be observed that, after this point, the series will become exhausted and is incapable of being further extended, because of the disappearance of the rate of increase, attendant on the approach of the population to its extreme limit. The last logarithm in the series corresponds to the mean rate for the thirtieth reduplication; but as the next tabular difference is equal to it in amount, the rate would at the end of the period be reduced to zero. The series thus fulfils one of the prescribed conditions.

On examining the details of the table, our attention will be first arrested by the sixteenth reduplication, marked D; for it is a little more than midway between this and the succeeding reduplication, that the date of the dispersion occurs. Hence the population at that date may be estimated to have been nearly three-quarters of a million, which cannot be considered an improbable number, to have entertained the bold scheme of raising a tower so high as to be beyond the reach of any fresh deluge, or to have become dispersed into separate societies, to form the first germs of the nations of the earth.

The next period which claims particular attention is the twenty-second reduplication, marked E; for it was twenty-five years after this epoch that the Exodus occurred. Hence it appears that previous to that event, the population of the globe had increased to between 33 and 34 millions. Now the census of Israel taken about this time gives 603,550 adult males, exclusive of the tribe of Levi; and adding for that tribe a proportion corresponding to the average of the other tribes, it would make the total nearly 642,000 adult males. According to the usual mode of reckoning, this corresponds to a population of about 3,200,000. Hence it appears that, according to our table, the Israelites were at this time somewhat under one-tenth of the entire population of the globe—a proportion which cannot be considered improbable, since this favoured race appears to have been rapidly multiplied at this epoch, in order to fill up the voids in the general population of the earth, caused by the destruction of so large a portion of the Egyptians, and the contemplated extermination of the idolatrous tribes of Canaan.

The next remarkable event is the second census of Israel, which took place in the reign of David at an interval of about 473 years from the first. There is, however, an unhappy discrepance between the statements of the results of this second census, as given in II. Samuel xxiv. 9, and in I. Chronicles xxi. 5. In the former passage, the numbers are stated as, 500,000 adult males for Judah, and only 800,000 for all the other tribes, excluding, however, Benjamin and Levi. In Chronicles the numbers are, for Judah 470,000, and for the other tribes excluding Benjamin and Levi, 1,100,000. This latter appears the more probable statement of the two, as giving a less undue preponderance to Judah; but from either result it is evident that to this tribe the promise of extraordinary fertility was now confined. The rate of increase of the other nine tribes may therefore be regarded as a fair indication of the average rate for the entire race, at this epoch of its history. It appears then that in those tribes the increase in 473 years was from 493,550 to 1,100,000 adult males—the multiple being nearly 2·229, corresponding to a yearly rate of increase of 0·001,7, which gives a reduplication in about 409 years. According to our table, the period of reduplication for the whole race at this epoch was 399

years, and the mean yearly rate of increase 0·001,737—a remarkable coincidence.

The next point is the year B.C. 525, about ninety-eight years after the 24th reduplication according to our table. This is the date of the Persian invasion of Egypt, at which time the population of that country is said to have amounted to 7 millions. The population of the globe, having then undergone twenty-four reduplications and about one-sixth of another, would amount to about 156½ millions, so that the Egyptians would appear to have constituted one twenty-second part of the inhabitants of the earth. Supposing them to have maintained nearly the same proportion from the time of the Exodus, it will be found that at that date they would amount to a little more than a million and a half; and supposing one-fifth of the nation to have been cut off by the death of the first-born and the overthrow in the Red Sea, we should have the number of the Egyptians before those disastrous events very nearly 2 millions. This tallies with the statement in Scripture that the Israelites considerably exceeded the Egyptians in number, and would make the united populations, before the Exodus, a little over 5 millions. The present population of the country is not above half that number—the nation having been in a state of gradual decay, from the period immediately before the Persian invasion, when it reached its culminating point.

There is thus little probability that the Egyptians exceeded 2 millions before the disasters which accompanied the Exodus, and we may accordingly conclude that, before that event, they constituted about one-seventeenth of the human race. Supposing them to have maintained this proportion from the origin of the nation at the time of the dispersion, we should have for the original followers of Mizraim, when he colonised the banks of the Nile, about 40,000. Now the accumulation from this number to 2 millions, being somewhat under six reduplications in the 640 years, which, according to the Septuagint, intervened between the dispersion and the Exodus, is quite reasonable, and such as might be expected at that early epoch in the history of our race. But if, with some chronologers who adopt the dates of Manetho as quoted by Syncellus, we place the foundation of the Egyptian monarchy so far back as B.C. 3900—making the interval between that event and the Exodus 2,400

years the accumulation from 40,000 to 2,000,000 in that long space of time, becomes improbably small.

Thus it will be seen how important is the bearing of the law of population on the question of chronology, and how much that law favours the chronology of the Septuagint beyond any other.

The difficulty presented by the long list of dynasties and kings, quoted by ancient authors from Manetho, and appearing on the Egyptian monuments, may be obviated by supposing that, like other countries, Egypt, in the earlier stages of its history, was divided into several petty sovereignties, and that consequently several of the older dynasties were contemporaneous. This same political condition we learn from the Hebrew records subsisted in the neighbouring country of Palestine, which was in like manner ruled by several petty sovereigns; while that kings were passing rife in those days may be gathered from the statement of Adoni-Bezek as reported in Judges i. 7—'Seventy kings having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gleaned under my table.' As for the gossip of Herodotus, about a succession of 345 Egyptian Pontiffs, each the successor of his father, it is equally credible with his accompanying averment that, in the course of the 11,340 years, embraced in their pontificates, the sun had twice risen where he now sets, and twice set where he now rises. The same author, however, confirms the view that there were anciently several contemporaneous sovereigns in Egypt; for he incidentally mentions that there were at one time, in that country, no less than twelve reigning monarchs.[1]

The Sothiac period, or Cynic cycle of 1,460 years, used by the Egyptians to rectify their calendar, might be a guide to the commencement of their era, were the date of its expiration well ascertained. Unfortunately, however, the only two authorities on this point, Censorinus and Clement of Alexandria, differ by 175 years—the former making the cycle expire B.C. 1322, the latter 345 years after the Exodus, or B.C. 1147. If this latter date be correct, the cycle commenced B.C. 2607, or 31 years after the Dispersion according to the Septuagint; and as the era would probably begin soon after the separation of the Egyptians, as a distinct nation, the Septuagint chronology and this date for the commencement of the cycle mutually corroborate each other.

[1] Herodotus, Lib. ii. § 147.

But to suppose this cycle to have been preceded by another would carry back the commencement of the Egyptian polity to a date anterior to B.C. 4067, which, having regard to the law of population, is highly improbable.

The Roman census affords a very imperfect criterion of judgment with respect to the prevailing rate of increase of the general population of the globe; for in the first place it embraced only those adult males who were entitled to the freedom of Roman citizenship, and secondly, the population of ancient Rome was continuously augmented by a large immigration. It is accordingly not surprising to find the number of enrolled Roman citizens to have increased at nearly three times the rate which the table assigns to the population of the entire globe. Thus the first reduplication took place between B.C. 508, and B.C. 294, or in about 214 years; and there is also a second one between B.C. 323 and B.C. 86, or in about 237 years. This makes the period required for two reduplications about 450 years; whereas, at nearly the same general epoch, about 612 years were required for a single reduplication of the entire population of the world. Thus the Roman rate of increase was 2·7 times greater than the general rate—a disproportion which, taking all circumstances into account, and having respect to modern examples of the rapid increase of the population of great cities compared with the general population of a country, cannot be regarded as excessive.

It will be perceived that, according to our second table, the 27th reduplication, which brought up the total population to 1,073,741,824, was completed about A.D. 1737, and that, as the 28th reduplication will require for its completion 1,330 years, and as about the tenth of that period has elapsed, there has to be added about a tenth to the above amount, bringing it up to 1,181,116,000, a very near approach to the generally estimated amount of the present population of the globe.

From the foregoing analysis it appears that our second table, based on the Septuagint chronology, presents a view of the manner in which the human race has multiplied on the earth, which satisfies the conditions necessary to its being regarded as moderately probable, and that is the utmost degree of likelihood which can be expected in such a case.

On examining this table, two particulars present themselves as worthy of remark: 1st, the immense disparity between the ancient and modern population of the world; and 2nd, the extreme slow-

ness with which the race has attained its present development. On comparing, for instance, the earth's population at the time of the Exodus with its present amount, we find that the entire number of the world's inhabitants at that early epoch was less than the present population of France, and that a greater number of individuals die in one year at the present time, than the whole number who were alive on the earth at the date of the Exodus. Again, as regards the rate of accumulation, when we consider that the population of England has, even in the face of a large emigration, doubled itself in the last 50 years, it is with surprise we observe that the entire population of the globe required for its latest reduplication nearly 1,000 years. We hence learn, that the rapid accumulations, which take place in certain countries, have but little effect on the general population of the world, and are rather indications of the substitution of one race of men for another—some races disappearing and others taking their place; while there is but a comparatively small yearly increase of the world's population at large. Yet that yearly increase, small though it be in comparison with the present population, is nearly as great as the whole number of the earth's inhabitants at the time of the Dispersion.

The very low mean rate of increase, which has prevailed during the last five reduplications, shows how greatly the multiplication of the race must have been retarded by the devastations of war, pestilence and famine, as also by the practice of infanticide prevailing to so fearful an extent among some nations. We are thence led to the conclusion that the rate of mortality must have greatly increased, and must latterly have ruled very high—particularly since the commencement of the Christian era. It is to this augmentation in the mean rate of mortality, rather than to a lowering of the rate of productiveness, that we are to attribute the great diminution in the rate of increase. The number of children produced by a single pair has maintained a certain average in all ages and countries; for we gather from history, that it was the same in ancient times as it is now. The probability therefore is that, except in the very early stages, the rate of productiveness has remained not far from uniform, and that the augmentation of the difference between it and the rate of increase is due entirely to a gradual rise in the rate

of mortality—the two former rates maintaining an equality until this last began to operate.

Let us now attend to the fifth column of the second table, which shows the probable number of individuals who have been born during each reduplication.

Looking to the period of the latest reduplication, embracing 982 years, commencing A.D. 755, and ending A.D. 1737, it will be perceived that the probable number of births in that interval amounted to upwards of 25,000 millions, or more than 21 times the present population. The number of births in the earlier terms of the entire series is so small that, in the interval between the Deluge and the Exodus, we find them to have been little more than one twenty-seventh part of the present population of the globe, while there have been more births during the last 1,000 years, than during the antecedent 4,000. The total number of individuals born into the world between the Deluge and A.D. 1737, the date of the latest reduplication, was 41,459,883,000; and, adding a tenth of the number of births corresponding to the 28th reduplication (being 6,791,573,000), for those which have taken place between 1737 and 1870, we shall find the total number of births to be upwards of 48,251 millions.

To these must be added a certain proportion for the antediluvians. In estimating this proportion, our only course is to suppose an equal number to have been born before the flood, as were born during a similar interval after that event. Here, however, we are met by another untoward discrepance, between the chronology of the Hebrew and Septuagint versions—the former making the interval between the Creation and the Deluge 1,656 years, the latter 2,242 years—difference 586 years. According to the former view, the number of antediluvian births would be nearly the same as that which took place between the Deluge and the Exodus; while according to the latter view, they would be about 1,705,540,000. Adopting this latter number, we should have the total number of births between the Creation and A.D. 1870 close upon 50,000 millions.

Before directing attention to the prospective part of our table, there are two important considerations to be kept in view—first, the extreme unlikelihood that the Divine mind—the most rational and law-loving of all minds—should, in regulating the multiplication of the human species, have hitherto proceeded on no deter-

minate principle whatever, no law capable of being ascertained and admired by subordinate rational minds. Second, the almost equal improbability that, if there be a law at all, it should not be the same for the future as it has been for the past; seeing we cannot suppose the Supreme Ruler to alter or suspend any of His laws, except for the attainment of some great moral end. If then the annexed tables be found to exhibit a pretty close approximation to the true law of the multiplication of the human species, it follows that to whatever extent they may approve themselves to the mind as a correct representation of the law which has prevailed in time past, to that same extent ought they to commend themselves as a representation of the law which will prevail in time to come; for it is very unlikely that it should not be continuous throughout.

Supposing the law then to remain unaltered, it would appear from the second table that for the 28th reduplication of the population of the globe there will be required a period of 1,330 years, starting from A.D 1737; so that it will be completed about the year A.D. 3067. The probable total number of births from the Creation till then will amount to about 111,081 millions. That a further space of 2,010 years will be required for the 29th reduplication, when the total number of births will probably amount to about 315,926 millions; and that a yet further interval of 4,019 years would be requisite for the 30th reduplication, which would bring up the entire number of births in A.D. 9096, to about 1,131,572 millions. After that period all further increase in the population would cease, by reason of the limit imposed by the present restricted life-supporting powers of the soil.

It thus appears that, while the number of individuals alive at any one time increases at a very slow rate, the number of births in a given time augments at a much more rapid rate. During the remainder of the first of the future periods of reduplication, the average rate of additional births will amount to nearly the present population added every twenty-three years; during the second interval, the same amount will be added about every twelve years; and during the third interval, the same amount would be added every six years, or in rather less time.

It has been shown in the preceding essay, that there is good reason to believe the grand design of the Supreme Moral Ruler

of the universe to be, from an indefinite multitude born into the world, to select a certain limited number to constitute the permanent population of the globe in its renewed state, after it shall have undergone that great change which we are forewarned to be awaiting it—a change from which it will probably emerge with greatly augmented fertility. Supposing, then, such to be the Divine purpose, it will be perceived that the law according to which the human race is multiplied is so contrived as, without ever overtaxing the present life-sustaining powers of the earth, to furnish within a moderate limit of time an enormous supply of mankind from which the selection of approval may be made.

The permanent population of the world, in its renewed state, may therefore greatly exceed those narrow limits by which it is now restricted, and may ultimately prove to have been accurately described as 'a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and peoples and tongues.'

If the estimate which has been deduced from the dimensions of the symbolical city, the new Jerusalem and its wall, with respect to the probable number of the future and permanent inhabitants of the globe in its renewed state be correct, that number will be 373,248,144,000. Now, seeing it has been shown to be highly improbable that the total number of mankind can ever exceed double that amount, or 746,496,288,000, it is in the same degree improbable that the population of the earth can ever approach near to the limit fixed by its life-supporting powers in its subsisting condition. For, according to our second table, before the arrival of that time, the probable number of human births since the first introduction of the species into the world would amount to nearly 1,131,572 millions, or about 385,000 millions in excess of its highest probable limit. It is thus extremely unlikely that the population of the world will ever reach its 30th reduplication from the eight survivors of the Deluge, or come fully up to the present life-sustaining powers of the earth.

On the other hand, it has been shown, that the least probable amount which can be reasonably assigned to the total number of human births is one-third more than the estimated amount of the earth's future and permanent population, or, in round numbers, 497,664 millions. Now, at the completion of the 29th

reduplication, the number of births will amount to only 315,296 millions, being nearly 181,738 millions short of the probable minimum. There is, therefore, a great likelihood that the multiplication of the species will be continued beyond its 29th reduplication, and that between a fourth and a fifth of the 30th would have to be completed before the number of births would reach the probable minimum. But half the number of births likely to take place during the 30th reduplication would bring up the total to 723,749 millions, which is so near the maximum, that there is an extreme improbability of the prolongation of the temporal system beyond the time required for accumulating this number. The consummation will thus probably lie between that limit and the time required for completing 498,000 millions of births.

There may thus have to elapse before the termination of the temporal system as many centuries as have already expired between the Deluge and the present time.[1] Long, however, as

[1] To the careful student of scriptural prophecy, this number of centuries will not appear so great or improbable as they may perhaps be regarded by the general reader. Some of the best interpreters agree in thinking that the number of days mentioned in Daniel viii. 14 (according to the Chaldee version 2,300, according to the Greek 2,400), are to be reckoned as centuries, and that their starting-point is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. According to this view they would expire about A.D. 2,369 or 2,469; and at that epoch it may be anticipated that the promised restoration of the Jews to their position as an independent nation, under the *spiritual* Sovereignty of their Messiah, will probably take place.

If this event be symbolized in the Apocalyptic vision, by the emblem, described at the beginning of chapter xiv., of the Lamb standing on Mount Zion surrounded by the chosen of Israel (and it will be found difficult to assign to that emblem any other meaning), there is a long indefinite period to elapse between that event and the arrival of the specific epoch of 1,000 years, mentioned in chapter xx; while, even after the expiration of that epoch, it would appear from the seventh and eighth verses of the same chapter, that there is to follow, before the final judgment, another indefinite period, during which many of the nations shall become a prey to deception, and fall away from Christian truth. Nor is it unworthy of remark, that, in the eighth verse, an allusion is incidentally made to the extreme multiplication, which the human species will by that time have attained.

There are thus two definite periods, one of either 500 or 600 years, and another of 1,000 years, and two indefinite periods of unknown length to elapse before the final consummation of all things. That the first of these unknown periods is probably of great length, may be gathered from the accumulation of emblems, symbolizing the events that are to happen during its currency. Of the duration of the second there is not the same evidence. It is symbolized as being the epoch of a great and final struggle between moral good accompanied by intellectual light, and moral evil accompanied

that period may appear to us, while contemplating it in its physical duration, it will, to the mental apprehension of any man now living, seem to be a very brief space, measured in each case by the remainder of his mortal career. When our life shall have passed into the latent state, all idea of time will be lost, and thousands of years will appear as the twinkling of an eye.

TABLE I.

Showing the probable Law of the Rate of Increase of Mankind.

N.R.	Rate of Increase	Logarithm of rate + unity	First difference	Second difference	Third difference	Fourth difference
6	0·056420	0·0238467				
7	0·047833	0·0202919	0·0035548			
8	0·040325	0·0171689	0 0031230	0·0004318		
9	0·033809	0·0144403	0·0027286	0·0003944	0·0000374	
10	0·028183	0·0120704	0·0023699	0·0003587	0·0000357	0·0000017
11	0·023352	0 0100252	0·0020452	0·0003247	0·0000340	0·0000017
12	0·019230	0·0082724	0·0017528	0·0002924	0·0000323	0·0000017
13	0·015737	0·0067814	0·0014910	0·0002618	0·0000306	0·0000017
14	0·012800	0·0055233	0·0012581	0·0002329	0·0000289	0·0000017
15	0·010348	0·0044709	0·0010524	0·0002057	0·0000272	0·0000017
16	0·008321	0 0035987	0·0008722	0·0001802	0·0000255	0·0000017
17	0·006660	0·0028829	0·0007158	0·0001564	0·0000238	0·0000017
18	0·005313	0·0023014	0·0005815	0·0001343	0·0000221	0·0000017
19	0·004231	0·0018338	0·0004676	0·0001139	0·0000204	0·0000017
20	0·003371	0·0014614	0·0003724	0·0000952	0·0000187	0·0000017
21	0·002691	0·0011672	0·0002942	0·0000782	0·0000170	0·0000017
22	0·002157	0·0009359	0·0002313	0·0000629	0·0000153	0·0000017
23	0·001737	0·0007539	0·0001820	0·0000493	0·0000136	0·0000017
24	0·001404	0·0006093	0·0001446	0·0000374	0·0000119	0·0000017
25	0·001133	0·0004919	0·0001174	0·0000272	0·0000102	0·0000017
26	0·000906	0·0003932	0·0000987	0·0000187	0·0000085	0·0000017
27	0·000706	0·0003064	0·0000868	0·0000119	0·0000068	0·0000017
28	0·000521	0·0002264	0·0000800	0·0000068	0·0000051	0·0000017
29	0·000345	0·0001498	0·0000766	0·0000034	0·0000034	0·0000017
30	0·000173	0·0000749	0·0000749	0·0000017	0·0000017	0·0000017

by intellectual darkness, for the mastery over mankind; but the description does not indicate that the contest is to be prolonged.

To a certain extent, therefore, the prophetic indications respecting the future ages of the world, during the subsistence of the temporal system, tend to corroborate the views deduced from the emblem of the dimensions of the symbolical New Jerusalem and its wall, respecting the number of the renewed earth's permanent inhabitants, and from the laws of population regarding the length of time required for the accumulation of that number —a result for which it would well become us patiently to wait, even if we were to be consciously waiting.

TABLE II.

Showing the probable Manner of the Multiplication of Mankind.

N.R.	Population	Dates ♀ LXX	Intervals	Individuals included	Birth-rate
0	8	B.C. 3164			
5	256	3109	55	256	
6	512	3096	13	256	
7	1,024	3081	15	512	
8	2,048	3063	18	1,024	
9	4,096	3042	21	2,048	0·033809
10	8,192	3017	25	4,907	0·033764
11	16,384	2987	30	11,829	0·033719
12	32,768	2951	36	28,690	0·033674
13	65,536	2907	44	70,023	0·033629
14	131,072	2852	55	171,950	0·033584
15	262,144	2785	67	424,819	0·033539
16	D. 524.288	2701	84	1,055,192	0·033494
17	1,048,576	2597	104	2,633,170	0·033449
18	2,097,152	2464	131	6,592,630	0·033404
19	4,194,304	2302	164	16,534,770	0·033359
20	8,388,608	2096	206	41,450,320	0·033314
21	16,777,216	1838	258	103,708,900	0·033269
22	E. 33,554,432	1516	322	258,417,400	0·033224
23	67,108,864	1117	399	640,934,100	0·033179
24	134,217,728	623	494	1,583,750,800	0·033134
25	268.435,456	11	612	3,919,800,000	0·033089
26	536,870.912	A.D. 755	766	9,790,500,000	0·033044
27	1,073,741,824	1737	982	25,093,790,000	0·032999
			4901	41,459,883,596	
28	2,147,483,648	3067	1330	67,915,730,000	0·032954
29	4,294,967,296	5077	2010	204.845,000,000	0·032909
30	8,589,934,592	9096	4019	815,646,900,000	0·032854

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